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LAS ALFORJAS

BY

GEORGE JOHN CAYLEY

AUTHOR OF SIR REGINALD MOHUN.

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Con todo eso dijo el Don Juan sera bien leer la, pues no hay libro tan malo que no tenga alguna cosa buena D^r Q^te.

LONDON
1853

RICHARD BENTLEY NEW BURLINGTON ST.

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Love hath an idle industry :
  And foolish lovers fondly trace
  The name they love in any place ;
Nor stay to think how brief may be
The record of such registry.

They carve sequestered woodland boles
  Where solitude and silence reign :
  They scar the hostel window-pane,
To shake when any brawler trolls
His ribald catch to careless souls :

Or wandering where with sullen roar
  The vexed sea-bosom maketh moan—
  Deep-murmuring echo of their own—
They linger, in the sand to score
The name they love along the shore.

And yet they know the tree shall grow,
  Till tortured characters forswear
  Their legend : glass, though marked with care,
Shall break : they know the tide shall flow
And leave the sand as smooth as snow.

So, MABEL, on the first of these
  Ephemeral leaves at random ta'en
  From scented coppice-wolds of Spain,
I trace thy name my heart to please—
And trust them to the idle breeze!

The breeze of fashion fluttering by—
  Which often sports with flimsy toys,
  And makes a busy murmuring noise
'Mid rustling leaves that yearly die—
May let them fall or make them fly.

What if such foliage flew or fell—
  It could but last a little while:
  And, whether fortune frown or smile,
The first of these light leaves shall tell—
I care not whom—I love thee well!

LAS ALFORJAS.

CHAPTER I.

On Thursday, October 16th, of the year of the Great Exhibition, I embarked at the Waterloo Station, where I booked myself through to Paris for two-and-twenty shillings.

The carriage was full of foreigners. Opposite me was a young German, by a curious coincidence, also on the way to Spain. He was going by Lisbon and I by Barcelona. I begged him to call on me as he passed through Seville in the winter; but, separating at Southampton for our several packets, we forgot to exchange names.

At Southampton—which we reached about midnight—we were rattled down in an omnibus to the pier. Here we had to pay harbour dues—amount-

ing to twopence each individual, and a penny each package.

A Frenchman who had been a fortnight in London, and had not an atom of luggage, made great outcries at having to pay his twopence.

"Mais c'est infâme! Comment deux pence, puisque je n'ai point de bagages—absolument rien! 'Cré coquin de pays où l'on fait tout payer, même les choses qui n'existent pas, 'cristie!"

I explained to him that it was for *himself*, not any "effets suppositifs;" and consoled him with the reflection that the most Spartanesque traveller must at least carry a body about with him; and it ought not to vex his spirit having to pay twopence for so important a vehicle, for, after all, twopence was not a heavy *ad valorem* duty.

I met him again on deck. He was a hard-featured, weather-beaten man. One of his eyes opened wider than the other with a ludicrous, half-fierce, half-bewildered expression. His shirt was curiously dirty, even by the light of the fusee with which he lit a cigarette I made for him to calm his nerves. He approved of the Exhibition, and said he had occupied himself in it going "ça et là pour voir ce qu'il y avait de curieux; car le pays

n'est pas amusant." He could not speak a word of English, and had the impression that everybody wanted to cheat him.

Having eaten some cold chicken and ham, and drunk a pint of pale ale, I smoked a couple of cigarettes on the brazen upper step of the gangway (for the deck was all dripping wet), during which operation I counted my acquaintance among the stars.

There was a planet I had not the honour of knowing, directly below the Twins—that is, the three in a straight line, and the planet about twice as far from Castor as Castor is from Pollux. It looked reddish and I suppose it was Mars. Does this combination of Mars and the Twins portend unbrotherly strifes and dissensions in the country through which I shall have immediately to pass?

There is a theory wherein the wisdom of our ancestors is supposed to dwell, that much virtue lies between the sheets of a bed, and that at all hazards travellers should undress before they attempt to sleep. To me it would appear that there is neither comfort nor amusement in the taking off and putting on of garments (unless these functions are intercalated by a satisfactory means of general ablution,

which on a steamer is not the case), but much the contrary.

Again—where the beds are coffins, and the sheets about the breadth and texture of long towelling, there is a difficulty in keeping the narrow strip of bed-clothes balanced on one's knees and shoulders. The coarse sheets, especially, show a strong constitutional tendency to revert to their proper destination, converting themselves into tightly twisted cables and writhing themselves round their victim, who, if he be a person of classical imagination, dreams he is a childless Laocoon in a cold climate, and wakes up at once stifled and chilled.

The prejudice against sleeping dressed has doubtless come down to us, by tradition, from days when dress was much tighter and more uncomfortable than in these loose and easy days of long waistcoats and tweed shooting-jackets.

Having made these reflections, I took off my shoes—buttoned the straps of my trousers to prevent them ruckling up—put my feet into the sleeves of my great-coat, whose skirts I turned up over my knees —spread my plaid over all—and went to sleep.

CHAPTER II.

Friday, October 17.

It was a fine sunshiny morning. We got into Havre at a quarter to ten. I immediately went ashore and breakfasted, leaving my portmanteau to its fate. Going through the Custom House, I was rather alarmed lest the Douane should insist on inspecting a six-barrelled revolver, which could not be persuaded not to bulge out the breast pocket of my great-coat in a suspicious manner.

Returning from breakfast in about half-an-hour, my portmanteau was still on the deck unmoved and immoveable. I told the douaniers that I must have my *malle*, for I was going off by the eleven o'clock train. They shrugged their shoulders and said it was impossible. The luggage would not be looked over till two o'clock—that it was not their fault if the boat came too late to catch the train.

Knowing that the most formidable of French impossibilities are always routable by a charge of

cavalry, I stood forth upon the ledge of the lofty quay. It was low water, whence the difficulty of getting off the luggage; we ourselves had been landed in boats. From the brink I delivered a short speech, which ran (or rather walked, for my French is not very glib) thus:—

"Voyons, mes amis, s'il y a un brave batelier quelconque, qui me conduira au vapeur pour quérir ma malle à raison de cinq sous?" There was a marine animal resting on his fins below, but he did not rise at my bait.

"C'est qu'il n'entend pas l'Irlandais," observed some facetious bystander.

"Je suis d'accord qu'on me vole, car je suis grandement à la hâte pour attraper le train d'onze heures. V'la—j'offre dix sous!" This hooked the marine animal, and I went on board—seized my portmanteau and was dragging it towards my boat, when I was forbidden by the powers above. It was snatched from my hands and put into another boat with the rest of the passengers' luggage. I went on shore again, leaving my marine animal, not like Jonas when he was cast up, for I was very much cast down.

By this time, however, the steamer—which was half aground—had got within reach of a ladder from

the shore. As soon as it touched the bottom I dashed down it, plunged into the boat, and with great difficulty extricated my little all. It was an aged and heavy-laden portmanteau, unsound in the rivets of the leather loop by which it hung over the muddy abyss as I dragged it part of the way up the ladder, and I was seriously afraid it might drop off like Newton's apple.

As I swore vociferously, and was a good deal in the way on the ladder, my importunity was at last rewarded with success; and the officials carried up my malle as the first culprit, and laid it on the examining-block for execution. But the authorities refused to begin until *all* the luggage should be ashore. In vain I pleaded the *habeas corpus* of my trunk. They only shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders. However, I represented my case in plaintive tones, and kept on representing it till in about three minutes *this* difficulty gave way.

I had a hackney-coach waiting at the other door of the Douane, with my great-coat and plaid and revolver in it, to secure an instant and honourable retreat in case of victory. I was the only person in the boat who got off by the eleven o'clock train. It was too late, however, to register my baggage. I

was hurried into my carriage, not without some misgivings, though the porter said he would put it in. I was aware that in France nothing can be done without the greatest amount of absurd and useless formality, and that they are always determined to protect you whether you think the risk worth the inconvenience of the remedy or not; but it seemed too monstrous that they should separate a man from his luggage, merely because the registry had closed. Yet when I considered the strength of officious and official absurdity in France, I could not help maligning my planets that I had not had the sense to see my luggage put in by fair means or corrupt.

When, in the front rank of an anxious crowd, I rushed to those awful folding portals whereover is written, DISTRIBUTION DE BAGAGES (but where should be written, LASCIATE OGNI SPERANZA, VOI CHE NON REGISTRATE), I waited there with agonising sensations, and saw, through the grating, trunk after trunk, and valise after valise, and every other sort of luggage after every other sort of luggage, borne in on the shoulders of brawny and blousy porters. It came not. I made my complaint. It would come by the next train, five in the morning. I signed my name in a book—sighed, and sallied forth.

It was about six. The night was falling fast. I had intended to go direct to the Lyons railway, and take up my night's quarters at some neighbouring hostel. That was now impossible, so I put into the Hôtel de Normandie, close to the station—hired an apartment — rolled up my great-coat, with the revolver and three rouleaux of nine Napoleons each, put up in separate fingers cut off an old glove, in its pockets—stuffed the bundle into a closet, locked the door, and went forth into the night, bearing with me the key of my arsenal, treasury, and wardrobe.

My first step was to take the bearings of my street by the heavens. Next I bought a pair of gloves. Arcturus was setting behind the columns of the Madeleine as I reached the Boulevard des Italiens, and coming to No. 27, I recollected that I had an acquaintance living there. As 27 is my lucky number, being the third power of 3, and as he dwelt on the third story, all which formed a fortunate combination (although the day was Friday), I thought I should probably find him at home.

The reader is possibly one of those credulous and prejudiced persons who, bigoted to believe only in that inconsiderable atom of truth for which science

has already discovered a reason, suppose there is no influence in stars and numbers and days.

It is because I arrived in France on a Friday (which misfortune I no doubt deserve for my sins), that I have been planing the hours off my log of life against the grain all day. All day! probably the malign influence will last me all through France.

To return to my friend on the third story—I found him at home, but just dressed to go out to dinner. I asked him where I could get water-colours.

Following his directions, I went to the Place de la Bourse.

I was some time selecting my paints and brushes. The shopman, a smart young democrat, seemed to take no interest whatever in selling his wares. Probably he was the prodigal son of the establishment, with a fixed income. He seemed, "not to put too fine a point on it," intensely bored, and ever and anon would ejaculate, *sotto voce*, "Oh, mon Dieu, est-il possible!" At last I finished my selection of paints, and began to try the points of the brushes. This overcame his last little detachment of patience, and he said,—

"Oh ciel! les pinceaux ne sont pas lents à choisir!!!"

"Il me paraît que je vous ennuie?"

"Un peu, vraiment!"

"Comme ce n'est que pour amuser votre plus parfait loisir que j'achête ces objets, et comme il m'est de la plus profonde indifférence qu'ils soient bien ou mal choisis, je continue avec délibération l'accomplissement de mon affaire."

This little speech acted, of course, as a declaration of war. Amid much violent and undiplomatic language, I withdrew the golden ambassador I held in my hand ready to drop into his capital. He, on the other hand, undid my little parcel and put each particular paint in its place, under the glass counter, with a flourish; making an extra flourish with the vermilion—I suppose, by way of expressing his political preference for that hue.

Thus I should have lost my only chance of being able to make any water-colour drawings in Spain (for there are no materials to be bought in the country, says the infallible Mr. Ford), had I spoken as I have written.

Instead of this, at the point where he delivered himself of the little apophthegm "that paint-brushes

were not things that took long to choose," I reflected that the poor young man was probably in love, or had a headache or an appointment, or had been recently reproved by his parents. Therefore, though I composed the little speech in my head, and had it ready in case my patience should happen to give way, I managed to keep it to myself, and went on with a specious calmness choosing my brushes, and at length, paying my money, departed in peace; I doubt not with the young man's blessing. Nay, also with his alms, for in his haste to be rid of me, I think he gave me about a franc too much change. However, out of pity for his weariness, and as the paints were quite dear enough as it was, I did not trouble him with restoring it.

I now wandered about and travelled a considerable distance, attempting to steer by the stars; but, though in former days I used to know the quartier between the Seine and the Boulevard pretty well, after about an hour I came unexpectedly on the Place de la Bourse again.

There was a man with a great telescope planted on the pavement.

"Approchez-vous, messieurs! Saturne avec son anneau! vingt-cinq centimes!"

I had a look at the dull old grandfather of the planets trudging his weary round through space, with his broad baldrick slanting across his shoulder. A cold bath at the Bains Chinois took the day's dust off me on my way home to the hotel, where I straitly charged the concierge to call me betimes.

CHAPTER III.

Saturday, October 18.

At a little before six I went over the way to the station.

The stars were shining. Orion was high in the southern heaven, and bright-eyed Sirius hunting at his heel. The Twins were almost in the zenith, and the moon within her own breadth of Mars.

I was just in time to see my lost one pulled out of the luggage van; and, after surmounting several impossibilities, I set off in a citadine for the Gare du Chemin de Fer de Lyon.

Dawn was grizzling the beard of night (by the way night is an old woman, but what of that, since some old women have beards) as I mounted my vehicle: and as my jaded and superannuated cart-horse stumbled along the Boulevard, broad streaks of light rose horizontally, as if Phœbus was drawing up his Venetian blinds.

At last he put his head out of his window; and

the first of his beams fell on the brazen mountebank who cuts his continual caper and blows his own trumpet on the column of the Bastille.

Having deposited my luggage at the foot of a wood column, and having taken advice of the railway authorities as to the train to go by, I found I had just three hours and three-quarters to get my breakfast in. It was during the long blank interval which succeeded my meal that I bethought me of a certain little book, seven inches by four—prepared paper—lead point. I sought my portmanteau at the foot of the pillar, brought the volume back to the Café du Chemin de Fer de Lyon, and began this history of my travels.

I began it in the hope it might be an amusement to myself, and a safety-valve for those brilliant things which I am accustomed to pour into the ears of my travelling companion, when I have one. But it proved more trouble to write than I expected, and, on looking over, it seemed dullish stuff, with which I dare say the reader will cordially agree. Let us hope it looks rather better in print.

Moreover, I found an agreeable and instructive fellow-passenger in Major Rawlinson, the arrow-headed character. He almost persuaded me to

become an Assyrian, and go out to Bagdad instead of Seville, which if I had done the reader should have had a profound little treatise on

THE VNIFORM CVNEIFORM;

OR,

ALL THE ALPHABETS OF THE WORLD FROM THE ARROWHEAD.

By RANDOM SHOTT, F.R.S.

instead of these less grave and serious volumes.

The recital of my exceeding ordinary and unimportant adventures have, therefore, slumbered for a few days.

The railway took us as far as Châlons, whence the Saône steamer carried us forward and placed us to the debit of the city of Lyons.

In Lyons they did not take me, like Lord Chatham, "to see where the Rhone and the Saône, different as they are, meet at last." And if they had it would have been of little use, as we arrived in the dusk of evening, and went away by the early twilight of dawn.

I could see, however, that Lyons was a very remarkable town; and as we ran rapidly along the deep gorge by which the Saône enters the city,

where houses with bright windows seemed perched among the dark masses of rock, the bell of our steam-boat, which kept ringing incessantly, awoke a garrulous society of shifting echoes.

The Rhone below Lyons begins to grow gradually from picturesque to striking, and from that to sublime. The hills become larger and ruggeder, and their grey rocks are clothed with the bronzed and tawny verdure of autumnal-tinted vineyards. Valence, Rochemort, and Viviers are striking places; the Côte-d'Or, Ventou, &c., respectable mountains; and further down the real Alps themselves, which I had never seen before, lifted their snowy summits far away to the left. It seems to me a much finer river than the Rhine. I thought of writing a song to—

"The vine-terraced mountains, the rocks of the Rhone."

But I was restrained by the thought that the letter O would probably be the only original thing in my first line, which reduced my poetry to zero.

We performed our voyage in a huge, gaunt, sheet-iron mammoth—420 feet long—gorged with boxes and barrels and bales of all sizes and shapes. We were ill accommodated, and charged dear. This

great river serpent dragged its slow length along to Avignon, where we dined, but saw little of the place except the walls and the coup d'œil from the train. The railway carried us in three or four hours to Marseilles, where Major R. was just in time to start for his caliphate in Bagdad by the Constantinople steamer.

CHAPTER IV.

Perpignan, October 28.

MARSEILLES is an omnigenous, cosmopolitan, picturesque seaport, which smells of everything in the world, but especially garlic.

Having nothing on earth to do, I went and sat on the endmost post of the pier at the left jaw of the square basin, to enjoy the beauty of the weather, and admire the bright blue waters of the Mediterranean, as the sunlit sails scudded over it hither and thither. This is the first time I have seen it. We are aware its shores are empires.

There were a good many fruit-stalls along the quays, and I ate a few dozen figs, which did not at all spoil my appetite for dinner.

Afterwards wrote letters home, and made up my mind not to go to Barcelona by steam-boat. It does not start on Wednesday, as I expected, but Thursday; and I should arrive in Spain on Friday.

Besides, I don't want to stay another day in Marseilles.

On the morrow at noon, I set off for Perpignan, taking my place, as I supposed, all the way. But I was swindled by the administrateur—a most amiable civil man—who gave me a Corsican contraband cigar; not a bad article. He told me they made excellent cigars in Corsica, and this was one of the most ordinary kind. It was a roughly-made, sharp-ended, crooked cigar, more like a planter than any other sort I know.

I had to retrace my trams on the railway as far as Tarascon, which is more than half-way back to Avignon.

At Tarascon there was an interval of a mile or two in omnibuses, and we crossed the Rhone by a suspension bridge. Tarascon has a fine old castle, now used as a prison. On the opposite bank is Beaucaire, with its rival fortress. In the days of Bertrand du Guesclin, the respective lords of these strongholds were at deadly feud. Olivier de Beaucaire, a sly old fox, succeeded at last in entrapping the gay young baron of Tarascon; and, while he kept him a prisoner, and continual boats were crossing and re-crossing the Rhone with

negotiations for the exorbitant ransom demanded, the captive managed to captivate the heart of Mademoiselle Beaucaire. She of course let him out by an underground passage. They were married; their heir inherited both baronies; and the castle of Beaucaire fell into premature decay. I wonder whether the prisoners of the period at Tarascon make love to the jailor's daughter. Old François de Rastaignac, from whom I have this legend, adds: "Entre ces beaulx chasteaulx il y avoit aultrefoys une rude chayne; et on faisoit force octroyes, ostant maintes foys les meilleurs barrycqs de ce bon vin du Costè d'or, que tant aymaient les pyeux prestres d'Avignon." I found his quaint old chronicle on a book-stall in Narbonne, and might have bought it for two francs and a half, if it had not been too bulky a folio to carry all through the Peninsula and back.

The run by rail from Beaucaire to Montpellier, along the side of a broad and fertile valley full of olives and orange-groves, with rocky hills in the distance, all brought out by the slanting beams of sunset, was very pretty and pleasant.

The summer which left England about two months before me is now decidedly overtaken.

Leaving Montpellier in the banquette, which is the windiest place in the diligence, and wrapping myself up for a considerable change in temperature after sundown, I was too hot in the night.

In Beziers I had to wait from half-past four to six in the morning for a change of carriages, and got a little sleep on the marble slab of a café table. The new carriage proved a wretched rattletrap; and it turned out I was booked no further than Narbonne.

What was worse than the "disgrace and dishonour" of being taken in, was "the infinite loss" of time. For it arrived ten minutes too late to catch the diligence for Perpignan, and I had in consequence to wait ten hours in Narbonne.

I amused myself prowling about among the Roman remains heaped in great quantities in the Museum Gardens. There is a fine church too—especially the inside—stone roof and handsome columns. It is hung with a quantity of wretched daubs, which my informant (a sea captain lately from the Gambia river, who made my acquaintance on the strength of his knowing a little English, and who was kind enough to show me about the place), assured me were principally by Rubens.

The streets were here and there blocked up by great wine-presses, which, as they were screwed down, gushed with purple spouts into all sorts of tubs, and jars, and pannikins. I got more grapes for two sous than I could eat; excellent grapes too. It is the deadly dulness of these ten hours that has revived my journal.

At eight o'clock, very weary of Narbonne, I set off for Perpignan, which I reached at two in the morning, and went to bed.

Next morning I wandered about the town, and up to the citadel. I inquired for the commandant, and was shown into the presence of a polite colonel with a wooden leg, and a very long, straggling, stringy, red beard.

He called out of his window—which overlooked the principal court of the fortress—and there came up a smiling old caporal, carrying a gigantic key or two. The châtelain led me up through a sort of cloister into another higher and smaller court, and thence up into the high tower.

There is a fine view from the top. Perpignan lies towards the southern angle of a fertile little province, enclosed between the sea and the mountains. The blue Mediterranean rounded the horizon beyond

about three leagues of hamlet-chequered plain, with white towers, olive-groves, vineyards, &c.

At about the same distance the Pyrenees come up from the sea; and, growing taller and taller as they advance inland, curve round to the sea again about Narbonne.

CHAPTER V.

La Junquera, October 27.

THE Pyrenees are very pretty mountains; wild and picturesque, but not very grand hereabouts. The diligence started at three in the morning, and reached the entrance of the pass about daybreak, while the rosy hues of the yet unrisen sun were creeping from peak to peak among the distant hills.

We passed the embattled brow of lofty Bellegarde, which looms like a great pyramid with some steps cut in the top of it; and I got out of France at El Boulou without having my passport examined on my passage through the country. But, alas! at Junquera, the very first place in Spain, I was brought to a dead stand.

My passport—a Foreign-office one, I had got visé at the Spanish Legation in Cavendish Square; and as it ran, "Visto en esta Legacion de su Majestad Catolica. Bueno para España," I naturally supposed it was good for all Spain, or at least to enter the

country anywhere I chose as a person warranted respectable.

But it now appeared that the signature of the Spanish secretary of legation, to whom I had taken the trouble to get a formal letter of introduction, was of no value without the endorsement of some trumpery (Spanish) consul at Perpignan, who could know nothing about my respectability, except that I was in possession of a genuine five-franc-piece.

This little investigation, however, he appears to think it important to make on all travellers passing this way; and, doubtless, gives the functionaries at the frontier something handsome for every passport they turn back to his office.

Among the rushes of Junquera, therefore, I am planted for twenty-four hours till my passport can be sent back, to be rectified, and return. My entreaties and representations were all in vain; and I now look back with affectionate regret upon my late elastic French impossibilities.

I drank chocolate, smoked cigarillos, wrote an indignant letter, dined on garlicky victuals, slept well, and set off next morning about the same hour I had arrived the day before.

The diligence which brought back my passport and

took me on to Figueras, brought me also a companion. A merry little pot-bellied, snub-nosed Andalusian shipowner, lately from the Brazils, who spoke French in a sort of pentameter cadence.

He was of some use to me as an interpreter (for, though I have been studying a book of dialogues all through France, I have not yet acquired the Spanish idiom), and managed well enough when there was plain sailing; but in any difficulty he fell soft and was easily done. But he had his merits, which consisted principally in eating and drinking, and laughing heartily.

At Figueras I ate more garlic, and nearly made myself sick by inhaling a cigarito of English tobacco. My companions at the *mesa redonda* (table d'hôte) said they had never seen an Englishman smoke the cigarette before. I told them I did that and ate *ajo* (garlic), "pour faire sortir la langue Espagnole en accoûtumant la bouche aux usages du pays."

The diligence stopped at Gerona to sup and sleep. It seems a stirring little city, all the inhabitants walking about in the lamplight. We set off again at two in the morning. Our road lay along the sea-coast, and was sometimes cut out of the face of

the rocks overhanging the beach. We breakfasted at Mataro, and took the railway (which also skirts the sea) to Barcelona.

Here I washed myself, and my companion shaved and dressed himself very smart in new clothes which he had brought from Marseilles. I was admitted to his levée, and was consulted as to the several articles of apparel he selected from his trunk; for, like David with respect to Saul's regimentals, "he had not proved them."

It was rather comical to see this squat, swarthy little object trundling about in his dirty stockings and drawers, sorting and selecting his gaudy garments with as much care and hopeful anxiety about the effect he was about to produce on Barcelona, as if—but there is no difference between Hyperion and the Satyr when they look at themselves in the glass. It is a beautiful arrangement of Nature that the snub-noses and pudding-faces, which so transparently mask the vanity behind them, are objects of such genuine interest to us.

More bother with my passport before I could take my place in the steamer for Valencia—more cheating of Commissioners—more triple bars of inefficient *douanerie*, which pretends to examine, whether you

come in or go out, and is bribed by ignoble sums to let it alone.

The steamer stops a day at Valencia. We went up from El Grao in a tartana, breakfasted, and, wandering about the town, met a fellow-passenger—a Frenchman. With him I ascended the cathedral tower. The view is fine. A large huddled city scattering itself and its innumerable steeples and towers through straggling suburbs and orange-groves into the fertile *huerta*, bounded by barren mountains and the sea.

I treated my fellow-passenger to coffee on our descent, and he insisted on standing a subsequent bottle of beer. It transpired in our conversation across the sloppy marble slab, that he was the valet of a member of the Cortes on his way to Madrid. He of the Cortes is the son of a millionaire, who made his money by leather contracts. The valet is rather an intelligent scamp.

CHAPTER VI.

Cartagena, October 30.

ALICANTE is a picturesque but somewhat tumble-down fortress.

There are some Americans aboard, one of whom characterised the above-mentioned citadel as "rather a high old hill."

We went ashore—ate figs and grapes in the market — climbed the high old hill, and saw a noble panorama of yellow, jagged, oriental-looking mountains.

There is another steamer lying off here; the engineers are, of course, Britons in both.

A voice over the blue waters—"Jim, my lad, can't you come *aboord* here?"

Answer—"Ain't got no time to-day."

"Blow yer, you never ain't got no time; if you'll come aboord, I'll give yer a drop of blazing good gin." I made acquaintance with one of our engineers, giving him a pipe of British shag,

which went to his heart and awakened all the fragrant memories of his long-deserted home. He was a broad beefy man from Glasgow, but talking Spanish for seven or eight years had taken the Scotch out of his mouth. He had settled his family in Barcelona; the little boy was at school there, but his mother had taught him to read English. He was a sharp lad, and he wanted to send him back to school in England; the little girl could read Spanish, but English fairly puzzled her.

From Alicante to Carthagena we had cloudy and rough weather—wind a-head. Indeed, the Spaniards say we were in some danger. I slept while the tossing lasted, but about two in the morning, when we got into the still water of Carthagena's harbour, I was waked up by the bustle of arriving, and could not get to sleep again for the bugs, which began biting furiously, as if they had been sea-sick, and just recovered their appetites.

At Valencia I had lost my greasy Andalusian, of whom I was about tired, and fallen in at the Fonda del Cid (where I breakfasted) with a Castillian—a dry, spare, high-featured, polite little man, in every respect contrasted with my former companion. He talks more and better Spanish, and understands less

French, from which I get thus gradually weaned, as I have to mix with it all the Spanish I can pick up, to make Don Alonzo understand. Sometimes I venture on a sentence of Spanish neat, and am beginning to understand a little of what is talked. To listen cautiously and to talk rashly is the way to get a language.

Carthagena has a noble harbour, deeply sheltered beneath mountain barriers of rock. There is also a vast and splendid arsenal. In the first are a few fishing-boats; in the second, about enough material to set up a blacksmith, cordmaker, and gunsmith in British private life.

I next went up to the old ruined Moorish castle, and coming down rather heated, went out in a boat and bathed in the sea, at which the people on the pier were greatly surprised, for the day was cold; as we might wonder at a Greenlander bathing in a snow-storm. The water was warm enough. Afterwards we dined, the party consisting of Don Alonzo, his friend Don Manuel (a grave man, something like pictures of the Emperor Napoleon, who is rather deranged in his stomach from our late rough work at sea), and myself. We then adjourned to a café, where we met another friend of Don Alonzo's, an

airified black-bearded young *empleado;* that is to say, employed by Government.

He had lately been married, and wished to show his house and wife to his friends, and a specimen of the *majo* costume to me: so we all went with him. His wife was young and pretty, and his holiday costume very gorgeous; rich green velvet all covered with silver spangles. I admired both, but expressed my admiration of the dress. He instantly said it was much at my disposition; and I replied, in a useful phrase out of the Handbook, that it could not change its master without disadvantage. We took our leave, and retired to rest in our *casa de huespedes.** We had three beds in the same room. All three having undressed, lit a long cigar apiece, and went to bed. The lamp was put out, and the glowing cigar ends were all we could see of one another. I observed "Quando se pone la luna las estrellas se ven" (when the moon sets the stars appear), which was received as a brilliant sally by the company, who are very good-natured, and often much amused with my efforts at the language.

We talked and laughed till our cigars were done, and as we were getting drowsy, and dropping off,

* House of guests.

Don Alonzo cried out lustily for a light, saying "Los animalitos ya me pican muchisimo." (The little animals have begun to sting me exceedingly.) I had nearly choked myself smoking under the bed-clothes by way of dissuading the little animals from approaching me; but my torments shortly began, as by little and little the love of blood overcame the dislike to tobacco in the minds of my bedstead-population. I waged a blind and ineffectual warfare all night, to the loss of my rest and the maculation of my countenance.

Algeciras, November 1st.

Left Carthagena towards evening; slept on deck for fear of the bugs, with which my berth abounds. In the morning we arrived at Almeria, where I lost my friend Don Alonzo. His wife and family came aboard the steamer to meet him, and seemed very glad to get him back. He had been to Marseilles with Don Manuel, to see after a ship they had chartered for that port.

I now fell in with an English wine-merchant on his way to Malaga, and a priggish little Portuguese. Together we marched up to the citadel, which we entered at the point of the cigar. It is an old

ruined fortress of the Moors, full of stones of emptiness, and prickly pears.

Leaving Almeria, we skirted along the rocky coast above which far inland rose the gleaming ridges of the Sierra Nevada, mantled in their eternal winding-sheet of snow. I slept on deck again. The night was windy and cold. Towards morning a large star rose in the south in a line from the lower horn of the Bull, through the belt of Orion, produced to about thrice the distance between them. I have never seen so far into the southern heaven before, but I suspect the star is Canopus. The fore-horse of Charles's team nearly dips his nose into the sea as he wheels his wain round the sunken pole.

Malaga is a dull place, celebrated only for sweet wine and invalids. It has a clumsy cathedral, handsomer inside than out. In one part the stone-work is gilt, and the churchwardens have probably only been prevented by their poverty from defacing it all in the same expensive way. At least to us gilding and paint take away from the idea of simple magnificence which belongs to highly-wrought stone-carving, because we never paint and gild it ourselves, and are accustomed to connect all such appearances with woodwork and stucco. Besides, gilding does

not go well with the delicate fawn-colour of stone, and destroys all that intricate and minute shading which otherwise falls so softly over the tracery of a sculptured surface. It is like gilding the features of a statuë.

After dining at the Fonda de la Alameda, I went on board and slept on deck. Waking up with the cold in the middle of the night, I found we were approaching a small, rocky island. As we passed, its form changed suddenly, showing a very sharp, leaning peak. This was Gibraltar. Charles's wain stood with its foremost horse below the horizon of the famous rock; so that the constellation looked like a huge flag planted there. Of course, a patriotic imagination filled it up with the intricately crossed stripes of the Union Jack.

I re-arranged myself among some sails, one of which I half unfurled and crept into. When I woke we were lying off Algeciras. Seen from this point across the bay, Gibraltar looks like an old man lying on his back upon a couch nearly level with the sea —some huge giant of the prime who had gone to sleep there, and proved a Rip van Winkle on a large and permanent scale. The face, with a round bald head resting on its pillow to the north, and the

articulation of the knee are very distinct. There is a ruckle in the bed-clothes over his breast as if his arms were crossed.

Gibraltar has no appearance of fortification in the distance—"no towers along the steep," and I should think it must disappoint some hundreds of highly fortified expectations annually. It is on the whole certainly a striking rock, but I should say you might easily pick fifty such along the west coast of Scotland. But as you could not carry away these little pebbles in your pocket and drop them at the mouths of important channels and seas, I suppose it does not much signify.

The straits, in passing outward beyond the ends of the world (of ancient navigation), look like the mouth of some gigantic river; and I feel sure, that if the Mediterranean had been discovered from the outside, its finder would have been astonished as he proceeded to see so much water,—in fact, to get into so large a bottle by so narrow a neck.

CHAPTER VII.

Thus far had the author of the above rather egotistical pages proceeded, in the manifest intention of making a book, when it occurred to him that the style was flippant and the matter unimportant—so he gave up the idea in disgust.

But the other day, happening to read them out of the scribbled old pocket-book to a young lady whose opinion and taste he greatly values, she said she did not think it was so bad; and that a readable book might be patched up out of this fragment and a judicious selection of certain letters addressed to herself from Spain.

Hereupon she brought out of her secret archives a huge packet tied up with a fillet of blue ribbon, which, being unloosed, a heavy shower of corpulent epistles fell out upon the sofa.

The author looked over some of them and said, "Where are those less voluminous letters written to you in great profusion soon after my departure?"

"Oh! those were so full of absurd nonsensical sentiment and stuff, that——"

"You burned them in short."

"Not exactly; but they are put up in a separate parcel which nobody is allowed to see nor has ever seen—not even Constance!"

"But, my dear madam, may not a man see his own letters?"

"No, you mayn't. You would laugh at them yourself now—and that I should not exactly like; besides there is nothing in them of any possible use."

This being the state of the case, the young lady proving obdurate; the author, not possessing that authoritative influence which he hopes some day to establish, was obliged to be contented with what he could get; and indeed carried off a good armful. Between the end of the journal and the first of the above letters the author is now unwillingly obliged to supply the hiatus from recollection.

Cadiz has been compared to a dish of silver. It is more like a service of white china on a blue tea-tray—cups and saucers, and tea-pots and coffee-pots, and butter-boats and sugar-basins, of all heights and

shapes and sizes, but with an undue proportion of coffee-pots.

I steamed across the blue bay and breakfasted with Don Francisco Morgan, a wine merchant of the Puerto, to whom I had a letter. According to the custom of the country there was wine on the table, and after breakfast I drank a glass of better sherry than I remember tasting before.

Happening to say so, he replied, "Do you like it? Very few Englishmen do at first. It is the pure wine."

"What!" said I; "do you adulterate your wines and own it without contrition?"

"Without the slightest, for the mixture increases the cost of the wine. The natural dry wine which grows about Xeres is seldom sent to England unless it is ordered. It is flavoured, to suit the market, with a luscious sweet wine of the same neighbourhood, and tinted with what is called burnt wine, that is, wine boiled down till it is thick and dark-coloured. This creates a confusion of flavour, and destroys the fine clear twang of a natural wine. We ourselves much prefer it unmixed, which is less sweet and more wholesome."

I went over a large *bodega* (cellar), and tasted a

few dozen pipes, of different ages; also the sweet sherry and burnt wine, neither of which were bad by themselves, though I don't think they improve the original sherry.

The Señora Morgan had a sister married to a *marques* in Seville, and to him Don Francisco gave me a letter of introduction. He also gave me a letter of credit on a banker in Cadiz, which, with singular providence, I had entirely omitted to take into consideration before leaving England, as I then had my pockets full of money. It was quite an accident my having any letters of introduction even, of which some kind friend, whom I never asked nor thanked, threw a few into my portmanteau.

Guadalquivir is a flat-banked, muddy river, adorned only by some distant mountains of the Sierra de Ronda to the right. Seven hours brought us in sight of the *Giralda*.

A cosmopolitan vagabond from Gibraltar conducted me to the Fonda de Madrid—a clean and respectable hotel. He took me in by the Gate of Triana. Let everybody coming to Seville by the steamer insist on entering by the Gate of San Fernando, which is not a hundred yards out of his way whatever hotel he is going to, as by doing so he

will pass the Cathedral and Plaza, and get a favourable first impression of the city.

I resisted the overtures of the Gibraltese laquais de place, conceiving I should have leisure to grope about, and find out what was worth seeing in the course of the winter without being led or driven.

The second day after my arrival in Seville some passengers came in from the steamer during the table d'hôte dinner, and among them was the young German I had met at the Waterloo station and travelled to Southampton with.

We agreed that the world cannot be half so big as is supposed, since if you meet a man once, it is always even betting that you will meet him again. Together, we explored the city — discovered the Cathedral, and wandered through its dim, vast, echoing aisles, where innumerable quaintly-carved and painted virgins stand amid their several little constellations of candles; and here and there some divine picture by Murillo or Alonso Cano looks graciously down from its dark recess, through massive gates of gilded iron. We stood before the famous Guardian Angel. New lighted from the clouds, and looking down with serious eyes of love upon his charge, he leads the baby soul with one

hand, and with the other points to a brightening Heaven. We stood and gazed; while murmuring far away in mellow cadence rose and fell the chanted prayer of many voices; and, faintly wafted from the swinging censers, came sweet odours.

Then all the senses smote the heart at once, saying, see what a mighty monument is here! What a massive, ancient, but still breathing evidence of the spirit of devotion which God has given to mankind. And all the voices of the dead in ages past seemed to cry from beneath the sepulchral marbles of the floor, much worn by pious knees,—they seemed to cry with the voice of sympathy and example, as it were the united clamour of a great multitude, "Here have we knelt! Do thou bow down and worship also."

And who in such a place shall answer, "Your creed was not the same as mine, nor do I love your ritual's vain pomp and pride?"

Did any one so rebel against the influence of the scene, the voice would rise and echo to the roof, "Go forth from sacred ground, thou cold and heartless man, whose love of thy Maker and thy brother is cramped and chilled by prudish scruples. Canst thou see no type of holiness in beautiful forms and

solemn harmonies? no earnest of moral effort in rearing to the Most High as much as man may reach of noble and magnificent—structures which they who laid the foundations never hoped to see achieved in their lifetime, but laboured at them, growing old and dying in their toil—not for themselves, but as men working towards some great end for the glory of God, and the good of generations yet unborn?"

The reader must remember that it is not the rigidly-Protestant author, but the souls of Catholic kings and Catholic priests, that have been speaking sharply to this unfortunately stiff-backed Presbyterian, who, on his rash entry beneath the heavy oil-skin curtains (which flap over the cathedral doors), had no idea of getting such a sermon out of flagstones.

I called on the Marques de Castilleja and delivered my letter. He was an amiable, intelligent man, with very quiet manners, light complexion, and talked excellent French. He bade me be seated in a comfortable arm-chair, and made no sort of fuss about my hat, which rather took me aback; as I had carefully got up all the ancient ceremonial described in Ford, and was prepared to struggle at least a quarter of an hour which of us should set it down. Instead of this he sat down again on the

sofa from which he had risen to make me welcome, and opened the conference by offering me a cigar.

As we sat smoking another gentleman came in, and was introduced to me as the Marques de Esquibel, the vice-president of the Casino or club, who promised to send me a card of *presentacion*, whereby the person presented becomes a member by invitation for twenty days, after which time, if he continues in Seville, he is balloted for, and becomes a subscribing member at about six shillings a month.

When our cigars were ended I took my leave; on which the marques placed his house at my disposal, and I replied that he also possessed a house at the Fonda de Madrid.

In a day or two he called, and told me that he was now in mourning for his father (who had died a few months ago), and therefore went about but little; and also had a great deal of business, settling his *mayorazgo* (entail), and paying off his brother's and sister's fortunes. He would therefore present me to a great friend of his, who was going about, and could introduce me to his friends at the club and the opera.

We went out together, and arrived at a stately marble gateway of a large house, just opposite the Museum, in the Calle de las Armas. Here, through

the slender and graceful tracery of the *reja* or filigree gate, could be seen a marble-floored and pillared and fountained patio. We rang. "Quien es?" was exclaimed, in the shrill voice of the portress. (Who is it?) "Gente de paz" (People of peace), I replied, to show I knew what to say; on which the door opened by a hidden spring, and the marques laughed, and wondered where I got that old-fashioned answer. I said I had a red book full of *cosas d'España.*

Don Josè Laso de la Vega was finishing a small concert, in which he played the flute. We begged him to proceed while we smoked our cigars. The marques left me here, and went back to his papers and lawyers. After a while the musicians departed, and I went out with Don Josè to see the *Museo* over the way.

After getting weary in long galleries of indifferent pictures, we came into the Sala de Murillo, a large room hung round with Murillo's best pictures. I never saw such pictures before—such soft, transparent, airy, and yet real imaging of things divine. His cherubs look as if a slight draught would blow them out of their frames. It is worth while to go to Seville if it were only to see this room.

We took a walk together afterwards in the town; and a shower coming on, sought shelter in an *Estanco de tabacos*, where the Calle de las Sierpes debouches on the Plaza de la Constitucion. Here behind the counter sat a lady of great beauty and wit, entertaining a handful of loitering admirers with brilliant things, which made them laugh very much, and which I was grieved not to understand. This was the celebrated Asuncion Gonzalez, Don Josè formally introduced me, and she received me with gracious condescension. I was surprised at the respectful deference with which the young men treated her; but I shortly learnt that she was a formidable sort of Aspasia, and a match for any Pericles that Seville could produce. As the Calle de las Sierpes is the principal thoroughfare of Seville which one passes every day wherever one is bound, I made a practice of buying my cigarillos in her estanco; and carried on during my stay in Seville a serio-comic, but strictly Platonic courtship, which greatly improved my Spanish. The only exception to the Platonic character of our friendship was one kiss fairly bargained for and received, in the way of business, for a portrait of herself, executed in my best style in water-colours. I made sonnets to her eyebrows in the

most Castallian Castillian I was master of, and sat on the counter reading them in my most impressive manner. I made her a silver heart, engraved with a bolted and padlocked folding door, and a weeping Cupid waiting on the door-step; which, being worn round her neck was to cause her heart to open to me in the course of nine days; but I never got any forwarder, except in the language. Here is one of the lays:

A ti dichosa amar parece broma,
Apiñado tu corazon de amores.
El que se aguarda un rato entre las flores
Luego por harto perdera el aroma.
Amada de tantos tu dulce flor
Por tan amada pierdes el amor.

Medroso, como con alas cansadas
Por media mar un ave a barco viene,
Mi desterrado corazon que tiene
Ninguna percha de sus aletadas,
Llegaba descansar sobre tu pecho—
Ay, de que frio encuentra el rico lecho!

Translated thus (after the manner of the Ancients).

To thee, the portals of whose heart serene
A hundred lovers throng, love seems a jest.
One that in sweetest flowers long couch'd hath been
Shall find their fragrant perfume lose its zest.
Thou by so many prized, most rarest flower,
From being so much loved, know'st not love's power.

As in mid-ocean comes with weary wings
Some timid bird upon a sail to light,
Mine exiled heart with weary flutterings
Without a resting-place to ease its flight,
Hath come at last to perch upon thy breast—
Alas, how cold a spot to seek for rest!

I suppose I contrived to amuse her, for she tolerated me as one of her most troublesome adorers: she certainly amused me, and I hope the reader will not be scandalised.

I lived in the house of one Juliana, once a celebrated beauty; here also lived my Spanish master, Señor Vasquez—the only master of languages in all Seville. He speaks and teaches English, French, and his native language. The course of my life used to be something like this:—

Nine to ten, read Don Quixote with Señor Vasquez. Breakfast on chocolate and toast. Feeling rather cold I open my window and go out to smoke a cigarillo on the sunny balcony, during which I divide my attention between the stream of cloaked and mantilla'd figures passing through the Calle de Velasquez, and a beautiful señora over the way. She is separated from her husband, and sits stitching, or reading her missal at the window all day.

Then I sit reading, writing, or engraving: and perhaps Miguel Laso de la Vega, or Ramon Ponce de Leon, or Antonio Rueda, come in and smoke a cigar. Then we go out for a walk, and coming about three o'clock down to the *Orilla* (which is both the Serpentine's shore and the Rotten Row of Seville),

there pace about among the beauty and fashion of the place on the pleasant shore of Guadalquivir.

This is really the drawing-room of Sevillian society, for there is no general society anywhere else. A few houses make a feeble effort at evening parties, but it is contrary to the habits of the city, and does not succeed. Houses are looked upon as home; merely places to live, and eat, and sleep, as privately as possible. In the opera or theatre and the *paseo* they manage to see enough of their acquaintances. Intimate friends are of course a part of home, and may sit in a corner of the sala, lighted only by the dim smouldering embers of the brasero, while the *señora madre* mends her stocking by the solitary lamp.

I dine at home and go to the Casino for coffee. Here, in a long narrow room, a group are standing in animated conversation before the blazing wood-fire at the end; and all along the sofa-range on either side, are rows of gentlemen with little tables standing before them, and cups of very black coffee or very pale tea, according as the table's occupant may emulate English or French manners.

"Buenos tardes, Don Jorge; como va?	Good evening, Don Jorge; how goes it?
"Sin novedad, y Vmd. Señor Conde?	Without novelty; and your worship, Sir Count?

"Perfectamente.	To perfection.
"M 'alegro.	I rejoice.
"Va Vmd. al teatro?	Do you go to the Opera?
"No tengo inconveniente.	I don't mind.
"Luego iremos juntos.	Presently we will go together.
"Hasta luego."	Till then—

I sit down and cry "Juan!" The waiter comes.

"Me traiga Vmd. café.	May your worship bring me coffee.
"Ya voy.	Already I go.

As he brings the coffee, Don Lorenzo, who is a captain of artillery, comes and sits down by me. He is "muy formal y politico," and justly proud of his French.

"Bon soir, mon ami."

"Bon soir, M. le Capitaine. Quiere Vmd. café?" If you are eating or drinking, and a person comes and speaks to you, it is indispensable to offer him some.) He says "Muchas gracias," which means No.

"Allons! un cigarre?"

"Avec plaisir. Savez-vous les dernières nouvelles de la Reine?"

"J'espère qu'elle se porte mieux."

"On dit que la blessure tient neuf pouces de profondeur."

"Quelle merveille qu'elle n'est pas morte! Comment trouvez-vous le cigarre?"

"C'est un très bon tabac."

As I increased in my Spanish, my friends, who used to talk French to me, began to give it up; because, whatever two persons may intend to do, they *do* always practically converse in that tongue which is, on the whole, the easiest means of communication; and I could mark my progress in the language as it rose and flooded, one by one, nearly all the French of my acquaintance.

A large party generally adjourned to the opera soon after seven. Don José Laso assured me that his box (palco) was my house, and I used often to go there, not for the music, which was third-rate, but being a large sheltered box over the stage, it was a convenient place to talk and smoke, and there were usually assembled in it half a dozen or so of my most intimate friends. After the theatre I either went to bed, an evening party, or back to sup on chocolate and *pan frito* at the Casino.

Sometimes, of mornings, I used to go and sit in the studio of Egron Lundgren, a very clever artist and agreeable young man. He is a Swede, and speaks English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, and I do not know how many other languages, all very well. His paintings were usually the costumes of the

country, which he did with great truth, spirit and taste; and great force and tone of colouring. He also does admirable rapid sketches in water-colours, and he used to give me a hint or two now and then, and let me copy what I liked out of his portfolio, which was full of gems. It was in his atelier, one day as I was daubing away, that the thought struck me of going about as an itinerant artist, taking likenesses at a cheap rate, in order to come more into contact with the people than travellers generally do, and Mr. Lundgren thought it a good idea.

Sometimes I used to take a long walk by myself, and once got as far as Santi Ponce, when I slept in the *pajar* (straw-loft) of the venta there; and next day went on to the ruins of the ancient city of Italica, where there are the remains of a Roman theatre. But this is described elsewhere.

Once the Marques de Castilleja took me out for a day or two to a country house of his in the Campo de Carmona, where he has olive farms. I wrote at the time some little account of the expedition, and here it is.

CHAPTER VIII.

VISIT TO AN OLIVE FARM.

Scvilla Pasqua de los Reyes, 1852.

On Saturday, January 4, 1852, I dressed myself in my Andalusian costume, breakfasted, put up a couple of shirts and other things, "tan claras y tan necesarias que no es menester de describirlas;"* besides which, I stuck the six-barrelled revolver in my *faja*.

I sat smoking my cigarillo over a chapter of Thomas à Kempis. There came a knock at the door, and I cried, "*Adelantes*" (forward), and he entered, not the person I was waiting for, but my preceptor in the Spanish. It was not his day, but he had missed the preceding, his hours having been, as they often are, deranged by saints' days, and he came now instead. Though I had no idea we should have time to finish it, I began my lesson, to fill up the moral vacuum which is always caused by expecting any-

* "So evident and so necessary that it is not needful to describe them."—*Don Quixote.*

body, and was busy translating "The Bible in Spain" into my best extempore Spanish, when an ancient serving-man of the Marques de Castilleja arrived, and informed me that the marques was waiting in the Calle de la Muela, my own street (the Calle de Velasquez) being too narrow for carriages.

I put on my Calaniés hat, which is about the shape and size of a small cheese or a large skittle-ball, and my coarse *capa* of *panno pardo* turned up with scarlet, under the ample folds of which I carried my little linen bag of moveables, and sallied forth. I found the marques (also got up for the country in the national costume) seated in a very red and yellow *calesa,* and we jogged slowly out of the town by the gate of Triana.

This gate is exactly on the opposite side of the town from our direction, but we took it because the streets are in that direction passable, which those towards the Caños de Carmona scarcely are.

Having made half the circuit of the city outside the walls, we turned towards the open country by the road which skirts the ancient Moorish aqueduct (caños) which supplies the city with water. The famous Guadalquivir supplies it only with a limited navigation and unlimited mud.

The roads were very bad, and we went along at a foot's-pace, till, passing the Cruz del Campo, we came to Torre Blanca, where there is a white tower (from which the place takes its name), a toll-bar, and a venta. Here we descended to drink a glass of manzanilla and eat a little round sponge-cake whitened with sugar outside, which the ventero informed us were "muy buenos de Alcalá." At Torre Blanca we left the *camino real*, and struck off on the old *arrecife* de Carmona, and the dark green orange groves interspersed with still darker cypress spires, which had lined the approach to Seville, changed into the bushy *dehesa* or wilderness.

The narrow track was lined with wild olives and *palmitas*, and here and there the aloe lifted its gigantic spikes.

The road did not improve, being, in places, hidden by long pools of water. The day was beautiful, and we went along talking and laughing, without troubling ourselves about the pace we went, more than an occasional word of banter with the steady old calesero, who sat at the marques's feet, with his legs dangling over the shafts.

To the left appeared, through the misty mid-day sunshine of the plain, the brown range of the Sierra

Morena; and to the right, in the far distance, arose the blue mountains of Ronda.

After awhile the dehesa changed to olive-groves, and we got into mazy private roads which wound among the trees. At last, after about three hours and a half on the road, we came in sight of a long, low mass of white building, with a pinnacle-mounted gateway through which we passed, amid the greetings of a motley crowd of retainers, into a vast court-yard, around which were the establishments for grinding the olives and storing the oil, besides stables and dwellings for the retainers.

Here, leaving the calesa, we went through an iron gate into a *patio* with a fountain and marble arches and columns. The house was a curious rambling arrangement of corridors and passages, and galleries hung with quaint old family-portraits in wigs and brocade, and likenesses of the Kings of Judah signalised with their respective names in yellow paint.

Having inspected the house, and lastly reached the dining-room, the basket which had come with us from Seville was unpacked, and out of it came cold fowls and ham and beef, butter, chocolate and a paper of tea. As it was three o'clock we lunched,

and ordered dinner at nine—being waited upon by a stout old lady, the wife of the steward.

Each of us now armed himself with a polished yew club, which appears to be the legitimate companion of predial inspection, and sallied forth. This stick (called *porro*) is about five or six feet long, often forked at the smaller end, and is held a little above the middle with the heavy knob on the ground, so that when you walk it swings between its planting-places like a pendulum. The one the marquis used was a sort of hereditary rural sceptre, which had descended to him from the hands of his father and grandfather, and very likely from their fathers and grandfathers to them.

We first went to see the olive-mill. In form it very much resembles a chocolate-mill—a huge wheel of granite, shaped like the thick end of a cone, rolls round a piece of timber on which it is pivoted, being drawn by a mule yoked to a crooked beam. This beam jutting from the central timber bends over the wheel, receiving half way the other end of its axle.

On the opposite side of the central timber (which is also pivoted in the stone crushing-floor and a beam of the roof), there is a wooden funnel full of olives. This keeps slowly laying down the plump

purple berries, which the roller, as it comes round, keeps crushing with a fat crackling sound, not unlike that which proceeds from the basting of meat, only on a larger scale.

The pulp, as it accumulates, is shovelled off and placed in layers between round mats under the press. These mats are about six feet in diameter, and have a hole in the middle. When there is a sufficient pile of pulp and mat sandwiches, the whole is wetted with hot water, and the press (an immense lever about forty feet long) comes down upon it, being lifted at the other end by a screw with spokes like a capstan. The oil, of course, floats on the surface of the water, and is run off into tanks.

Having seen how the oil was made, we went out to see how the olives were gathered, accompanied by Ramoncillo, the gamekeeper—a strange, lurching vagabond who squinted at right angles, and had all his arms and legs of different lengths. He wore the dress of the country, much the worse for wear; over his broad, red, slovenly-arranged faja were strapped a profusion of outlandish belts and baldricks, and in his hand he bore a musket ornamented with silver.

After wandering some time among the devious paths of the olive-grove, we found the little colony

of gatherers; for colony it seemed, being composed of men, women, and children down to the smallest possible dimensions. The babies, who had usually a very little girl to take care of them (unless they were slung up in a *manta* out of the way among their metaphorical brotherhood of olive branches), sprawled and babbled around head-quarters.

Here, by a purple mountain of spoil, stood the general of the little army who, in all directions, were waging war with the trees of peace, besieging them with scaling ladders and belabouring them with long staves. The women (whose petticoats were tucked up above their waists, but who, to make up this little deficit of decency, wore breeches), were on their knees underneath, picking up the bright little berries as they rained from the beaten boughs. I tasted an olive, though I was aware it was not likely to be good. Let the reader imagine a rotten morel cherry soaked in oil, and he will not be far from having an idea of a ripe olive, except that there is a bitter, astringent after-taste which sticks in the throat, and prickles on the tongue for some time.

The green olives, which we eat in their pickled state, are no more like the ripe, than pickled walnuts are like the walnuts of dessert.

When any of the women had filled their baskets, they came with them on their heads to the purple mountain aforesaid, and discharged their gatherings upon the heap. If there was much leaf and rubbish mixed with the fruit, the woman tilted up her basket behind and let a slender stream of olives fall from above her forehead, while a man with a flapping sack winnowed away the lighter matters.

Over the heap stood guard the steward or *capataz*, an ancient man, with a grizzly stubble on his chin (for it was Saturday), standing with his legs apart, broadly planted in the dignity of his office. The straddling supporters of this weight of importance were encased in what seemed in front to be a pair of brown sheepskin breeches, but from behind revealed themselves to be but a slit apron fastened with thongs round each leg. Both his hands were on his hips, with each thumb hooked in the folds of his faja, and in the fingers of his right was a crooked whittle, with which ever and anon, as the basketfuls arrived, he would nick the score upon notch-sticks which hung in a curve of string between two branches of an olive hard by.

These sticks were regular tallies. Each basket had a couple of loops in which the gatherer's stick

rested, and when the basket was discharged, the bearer presented it to the capataz. He, fitting it on to its brother on the line, nicked them both with his eagle-beaked blade. By the way, this little epithet explains how falco (hawk) probably came from falx (pruning-hook); observe also the likeness between hawk and hook, all of them cousins.

I made a sketch of old Madruga, the capataz, with his head on one side, and a fireless-paper cigar mumbled between his large nose and chin; for his broad mouth had fallen in for want of teeth. I could not do justice, however, to the sort of confidential swagger of his attitude and expression.

The sun went down, and we returned to the *hacienda* (farm). The marques said that the cura would probably have arrived by the time we got home. He comes from Carmona every Saturday to say mass on the Sunday morning, being chaplain of the establishment. We found the olive-mill still working, lighted by flaring wicks in iron saucers of its own oil. At one of these we lighted our cigars, and were talking to the millers when there entered a corpulent old figure dressed in a rusty-brown jacket and breeches, a Calaniés hat, black leathern *botines* (the embroidered greave of the country), and

a broad black faja; he embraced the marquis with great affection and a profuse ejaculation of "vaya's." The marques presented me as "un Inglés amigo mio." — "Y muy amigo mio—Vaya, vaya, vaya!" answered the courteous cura, for so he effectively turned out, though at first I took him to be some superintendent over the head of the stout Madruga.

We now entered the house, where, at the end of one of the galleries, a great wood fire was burning on the hearth. Here we wiled away the time till supper, which, though bespoken at nine, made its appearance at eight; for in Spain meals, as well as all other arrangements, are ruled more by a sort of general approximation to the fitness of things than by any precise hours. The supper comprised *gazpacho*, and salad, and eggs fried in oil, with a little cold chicken and ham to eke out. We then returned to our blazing fire-side, which flared with a brilliant white flame, some *borruja* (the oily offal of the olive-press) having been thrown on the embers.

Here we smoked and talked, and were shortly joined by Madruga, who seated himself also by the fire, and discoursed in a somewhat sententious and confidential manner concerning the interests of the hacienda, the price of oil, &c. The marques from

time to time supplied him with cigarillos from a special parcel which he brought on purpose for his people. It was an edifying sight to see the solemn and deliberate manner in which he lighted them. In a pause of his talk he would take a wooden ember in the tongs, and, holding it several minutes in suspense, he would proceed to dilate on matters of state; then, in another pause, he would blow the cinder to keep it alight, and after awhile apply the end of his cigar, drawing in a succession of whiffs between his words, which (the whiffs) came out again in long streams from his nostrils; for in this country the fumes of the cigarillo are breathed down into the bottom of the lungs, and come out in volumes unknown to the short mouthful-puff of cigar and pipe-smoking populations.

At about half-past nine we went to bed. The cura and Madruga attended our *couchée*, smoking and talking, and assisting us in undressing; after which they took away the lamp, and departed with a good night from the capataz and the cura's blessing.

On Sunday morning, at a quarter to seven, the cura and capataz made their appearance, and woke us up to hear mass. I jumped out of bed, and, to the

great astonishment of the company, washed myself in cold water. The old cura, I believe, at first thought I had been seized with a sudden madness, and declared that such a process, he was certain, would kill him on the spot; by which statement it plainly appeared that he had never tried it.

We dressed, and wrapping ourselves in our *capas*, entered a gallery of the chapel opposite the altar, where the cura, attired in his robes, was already officiating, the people being gathered under the gallery. The gamekeeper officiated as *sacristano*. The altar was profusely decorated with paint and gilding, and possessed two very handsome wooden statues of the virgin—the one above, about two feet high; the other below, the size of life. These decorations had belonged to a private chapel of the marques's family in one of the convents at Seville, at whose dismantling they had been removed to this place. The chapel itself was a small high room at the end of a cloister under the columns of the patio, upon which it opened with wide folding-doors, so that when these were flung open, the cloister became the body of the chapel, where all the labourers collected. The gallery above the doors we entered from the house. After mass the marques and cura sat by

the fire while I danced a mixture of a Highland fling and horn-pipe up and down the long gallery, to warm myself, after my ablutions and devotions.

After a little while the marques retired with a pan of hot water to make his toilette, and I went out to take a walk. The men were all loitering about the court smoking and talking, and saluted me with a "Vaya Vmd. con Dios" as I passed the portal arch. I turned to the right and set off to make the circuit of the fortifications. A wall about fifteen feet high and about half a mile in length enclosed the whole house, with its courts and gardens, in an irregular figure something like a pentagon. I had not got above half way round when I was assailed by a great dog about two feet and a half high, long and broad in proportion, and a very formidable and fierce opponent to my further passage in that direction.

I was ashamed to turn back, though there was nobody looking on, the great stimulus of faltering fortitude, without which, as Sancho well says, "Pues no haya quien nos vea, menos habra quien nos note de cobardes."* I therefore wrapped my left arm in my cloak, and picked up a large round stone, with

* "Since none see us, fewer will remark our cowardice."—*Don Quixote.*

which to fortify my knuckles in case of an actual encounter, and proceeded slowly, facing my antagonist, who kept growling lustily, and snarling at me with ravenous teeth. I remarked the extraordinary complication of ruckles in his great jowl as he snarled, and it occurred to me that the word snarl as applied to a dog might probably be taken from the original sense of a tangle of string, or a ruckling up of leather, in which sense a *snarl* is still used in the north of England and America.

Having gone some way in the company of the enemy, who kept making unpleasant little rushes at me—coming within a few feet, and then springing on one side, as if not liking to lay hold of me while I showed fight—I heard another volley of latratious artillery a little way off, and perceived a second dog of the same dimensions, and apparently of the same political opinions. I now thought I was in for it, and began to wonder how it would feel to be worried by two wolf-dogs, for such they were; and remembered the death of a badger under similar circumstances, at which, I am sorry to say, I was once present. But when things are at their worst, the remedy often arises in the midst; and I perceived that the other dog was chained in the immediate

neighbourhood of some clothes and implements, and victuals belonging to the labourers, who had left them to attend mass. It immediately occurred to me that this was the object which the loose dog wished to deter me from approaching. I therefore jumped over a little stream and made a slight *détour* to the left—conceiving that a compromise under the circumstances was not dishonourable, for, as Sancho says again, "Retirarse no es huir, ni el esperar cordura quando el peligro sobrepuja ala esperanza." *

On my return we breakfasted. Eggs fried in oil. *Miga* (bread-crumbs steeped in water and sprinkled with salt, with hot oil poured over it in which a little bit of garlic has been boiled). This is eaten with chocolate, and is not bad.

The English have a strange unfounded prejudice against oil, and in favour of butter, which is as near as possible the same thing, only that oil is a clean, pure, vegetable fat, which keeps better, and is infinitely easier to have good than butter—while butter is the result of a greasy animal secretion, milked out of unpleasant udders by a dirty-fisted wench. Butter is not good after three days'

* "To retreat is not to fly, not to wait wisdom when the peril is greater than the prize."—*Don Quixote.*

keeping; and accordingly is much oftener eaten bad than good. Nevertheless, good butter is a good thing; and we eat it, because we know it to be so, in spite of all the disagreeable ideas which are connected with its origin. But of oil, from unfamiliarity, we have an abhorrence. Our first acquaintance with it in childhood is through that unencouraging sample called after the elder of the constellated twins; our next is in the smell of the lamp. When subsequently we see oil in a salad, it shocks our prejudices. On tasting it with a candid determination, we find it good; but still there are few Englishmen who, in tasting a sample of oil, would swallow a spoonful, which a Spaniard would do as unconcernedly as we should a spoonful of cream. I have the national horror of oil, but I cannot say that, on honest experiment, I find that in good cookery it is a bit worse than the best butter; and in some cases it is better.

After breakfast we smoked, of course; and I drew a likeness of the cura. We then went out to see the labourers at work, for it was past twelve. I took my pistol and discharged its six barrels in succession at the trunk of an old olive-tree. The cura, as well as the olive-tree, was much struck, and the people

astonished. The labourers were finishing their dinners, and I took a sketch of the group, which was very picturesque, being composed of men, women, and children in very heterogeneous attire and attitudes. After this I took another sketch of the donkeys, with their great *estera*-panniers on their backs, resting under the trees, waiting to carry away the fruit. The sun was very pleasant; and having finished my sketches I spread my cloak, and lying upon it with my head on a pannier, and a cigarillo in my mouth, I went to sleep, and did not wake till three o'clock. The marques, who woke up about the same time, proposed that we should return to the hacienda mounted on the donkeys, which we accordingly did.

We sat a little while in the olive-mill on which the sun was shining, while the thin melancholy mule, with matting-blinders, walked his dreary round. I here made another sketch of the mill, which may be seen at the head of this chapter, and Ramoncillo, the gamekeeper, who had seen me draw his father, the capataz, requested me to draw one of the millers, a very grim personage in a scarlet cap, something like those of Catalonia. I told Ramoncillo himself to come up-stairs to be sketched after dinner, for he

was too perfect a vagabond to be left out of my book.

After dinner he accordingly presented himself; and as his mother had just summoned me to witness the confection of gazpacho, I compromised the matter by painting in the kitchen. As to the gazpacho, it is made by breaking up a tomato, a pimento, and a little bit of garlic about as big as half of a split kidney-bean. This is done in a strong pot with a wooden pestle. About three table-spoonfuls of oil, four or five of vinegar, and a dozen of water, mixed with the vegetable pulp, forms the sauce in which a mass of bread-crumbs are steeped, which being accomplished the compound is gazpacho.

While this operation was going on I set up Ramoncillo in a corner of the kitchen, leaning on his musket, and drew and painted him. The old lady would now call my attention to some fresh ingredient in the mortar, and then come and exclaim over the growing likeness.

"They were his very eyes!" (The portrait squinted if possible more horribly than the original.) "And only see how the breeches are exactly of the same colour." They were of a sky blue. But what most delighted her, and the other relatives of the

victim who gathered round his execution, was that I did not omit even the little jet brooch, which he wore in his shirt front. The representation of this remarkable object by an oblong spot of black paint was considered a master-stroke of art.

When I had done, there were murmurs of applause, mingled with eager whisperings, which I guessed were to the point of whether I could be persuaded to leave this portrait with his family; and sure enough in the evening, after supper, the cura opened this delicate question with much diplomatic skill, and I finally had to cut him out of my book. After a short visit to the olive harvest, we returned and sat by our blazing chimney, to which resorted the patriarch Madruga, several of his sons, and a few of the labourers. These last were not accommodated with chairs, but squatted round the hearth on their hams, and were supplied with cigars occasionally from the marques's special paper. *Madruga*, which in Spanish means the dawn, is not the patronymic of the capataz, though he is invariably called by it. It is an honourable soubriquet which he had acquired in his youth by habits of early rising. The marques made some strong *aguardiente*-punch and regaled the company.

After the tag-rag of the party had retired, the marques made some very strong tea, which, with slices of bread and butter, was our supper. Old Madruga and his wife looked on at this un-Spanish meal as the simple inhabitants of some farm-house in Yorkshire might do, if a travelled son of the landlord were to make a bowl of gazpacho for his shooting luncheon. When we had done, the remains of the pot were administered to them, and they drank it, for the honour of the thing, with some wry faces. The cura entertained us after tea with passages from his life; he had been a soldier up to the fall of Napoleon, but I don't remember many of his adventures. Next day we returned to Seville, and I hope the reader may be as well pleased with the expedition as I was.

LETTER I.

Seville, Jan. 9, 1852.

DEAREST MABEL,

The enchanted city still encircles me with her Moorish girdle of battlements and towers. The winter continues to be as sultry as usual, and the roses by the banks of Guadalquivir bloom unwashed save by the dews and the Infanta's gardeners. Often, in my early morning walk, I see young men, in the gay costume of the Andalusians, scale the little palisade defences, and with the hasty hand of stealth pluck a flower or two, eluding the truly Spanish vigilance of the horticultural staff, to say nothing of the military point of honour (bayonet, of course) which guards the palace portal just over the way. I see these depredations and sigh, not for the national disregard of royal property, but because I know the happy pilferer will soon see his fragrant spoil twined in the raven tresses of his dark-eyed Andaluza.

Talking about dark eyes, there are some very dangerous lightnings shot from the dusk of the

cloudy mantilla (if the semi-transparent black blonde which deeply borders it, may poetically license that shiny silk piece of attire to be called cloudy, but you see my clouds were necessary for my lightning), and I should have been struck many times if I did not wear a talisman, that you know of, over my heart.

That miniature, like the Gorgon's head (whose hideousness was too much for the ugliest customers), is a shield against beauty's glances by superior beauty. It has not petrified many of the fair maidens of Seville yet—and, indeed, it would be a pity, as their charms are not of the sculpturesque order; but, as far as concerns them, it has silently smiled my heart into stone and made a palace of my bosom, wherein the memory of the miniature's original imprisoned dwells alone. I think you know the high ideal type of beauty I most admire, I have told you so many times; but, if you have forgot, as, being a lady, you have a right to do, I need not remind you, for you will perceive it at once on a little reflection.

Now, if you have done looking at yourself in the glass (don't be angry, Miss Vanity), we will return to Seville and the object which, without vanity, I may presume interests you most (knowing of nothing

else) in that city; to wit (as vulgar authors without any visible reason often write instead of viz.), to wit, I say, myself. I would have you to know, then, for your greater satisfaction, with regard to that most interesting object, that I am exceedingly well; and that I have every reason to think my friends were deceived in supposing my lungs were about to strike work: and I feel confident, unless something else happens, I shall for some time belie their breathless expectations.

Your last letter is all full of anxious inquiries, with which I beg in future to be troubled no more; for I am too fond of writing about myself to give up any part of that prerogative to my correspondents, whom I expect and enjoin to write in return about themselves, on pain of instant erasure from my good (blotting) books.

You will have probably heard that I am expecting my friend; I need not tell you what friend; for, even if you should know nothing of this sudden and very kind idea of his, you cannot be at a loss; for you have long enough occupied the principal apartment in my breast to be aware who is your fellow-lodger on the second floor. Indeed, I am beginning to feel the want of a friend; not that I can be said to be

strictly lonely, for I have in the society of Seville a crowd of most amiable acquaintances, whom I like, some of them very much, and who have been most kind to me on very little provocation. But (unfortunately! or fortunately?) the heart of man, which is a polypus as well as a bivalve, cannot quickly close its hundred feelers around new objects, and the fact is, that I have felt melancholy at times.

Do not laugh, hard-hearted maiden! I know you think I do nothing else all day long, because I am always merry in your presence. "Am I so very amusing?" you say. Not the least; but, for some unexplained reason, my pulse beats quicker in your presence. The same effect is produced by brandy or sudden fright. People easily laugh when they are tipsy or startled, or have the blood galloping through their veins from violent exercise; dancing, for instance. We all know what small wit will do for ball-rooms. That you should produce the same result as brandy is natural, for you are truly an intoxicating spirit; but, so far from being a sudden fright, I live in hopes that you may prove a permanent beauty—constant, I mean.

What nonsense I write! Do I? My dear child, this is a love-letter, and if there was not plenty of

nonsense in it, it would stand you in no sort of stead when you come into court to prove a breach of promise against me for marrying the lovely Maria de la Anunciacion—a curious name, but a very pretty person, I assure you. Shall I describe her? No. Look at yourself in the glass again, and alter the colour of the eyes and hair to jet-black; imagine a dark, mysterious, passionate earnestness, instead of your own sweet, domestic, truly English smile (by the way I know you are frowning, with a terrible thunder-cloud drawn across the heaven of your brow, at my mention of this beautiful creature), and you will have more than a tolerable idea of her. Indeed, the features are so like that it pleases me to look at her; she reminds me of my own Mabel. "Why don't I look at my own Mabel's miniature then?" Unreasonable woman! I can't be always pulling your miniature out of the waistcoat-pocket nearest my heart. People would stare, and think me a moonstruck lover. But there is no objectionable singularity in looking at live ladies. Well, you are not quite satisfied after all; then I will tell you, she is not a live lady any more than your portrait, only she is larger, and better painted, by one Murillo, a celebrated artist in his day, whose works are still

much valued. There is a good collection of them in the museum of this his native city, and the charming Anunciacion is one of them.

H—— has written that he is coming out by the steamer of the 27th to console me in my exile. "How nice of him!" you will say, and call him a "dear creature," in the language of your sex. In any case, it would be a very kind deed to go such a distance to console a cheerful invalid (who has next to nothing the matter with him), even if he were not otherwise than in the mind to travel: for a start of fifteen hundred miles alone is not a light undertaking. But in his case, wearied as he is with that dreadful expedition over the western deserts, whose hardships have made him very fond of happy England, it is an act of most self-sacrificing friendship to exchange the peace and quiet and comfortable living of home for the stringy ollas and ravenous fleas of Spanish travel.

You, dear creatures, who have all your lives been accustomed to a nice joint and plenty of rice-pudding at luncheon time, are apt to be magnificently stoical and indifferent about good or bad living; deeming, in your innocent hearts, that the whole difference is comprised in the absence or presence of

smart made-dishes; which partly, perhaps, owing to the simple elements or aliments of natural philosophy above alluded to, you are accustomed to look upon with a specious calmness at dinner.

I have been imagining all sorts of delightful expeditions to make when H—— arrives, which (D.v.) will be little more than a fortnight now. I have been so busy counting off the days since I got his letter, there are only these wearisome eighteen left.

I wrote immediately to tell him to bring out some light ornamental wares of English manufacture, whose sale will give him a character and profession on the road; for my idea is, not to travel as ordinary stupid tourists, gaping at pictures and churches, and being cheated and ciceronied, by that raff and scum of the people, who devote themselves to the disadvantage of such travellers; but to go from village to village, dealing with, and living with the people at large, or rather, the peasantry at small.

My own profession is to be that of a journeying jeweller, and seller of potent charms and talismans, crucifixes, &c., which I shall make and engrave with hieroglyph inscriptions for the credulous. All

nations have a suspicion of, and a contempt for, the impertinent curiosity of mere travellers.

> "I'd be a bagman the country to scour,
> Disposing of wares to the rustics I meet,
> To write a romantic, adventurous tour,
> Of the *bijoux* I sell and the boobies I cheat."

Of course H——, being an author as well as myself, we shall between us do a work in two volumes, and make them very voluminous. I, for my part, think travels the stupidest things in the world, but we are credibly informed that the public reads them voraciously; and, as we have chosen the profession of swine-feeders, we must prepare the swill accordingly. The critics, wise pigs, who have the first pick of the trough, and who prefer plain home-grown barley to the plate-and-dish-washings of foreign cookery, will no doubt treat us with their usual taste and forbearance.

I think we shall ride on donkeys, which will give a convenient handle to our facetious reviewers. "The flat and tedious narration of this truly *asinine* excursion, &c. The tourists were a party of four, two of whom relate, &c."—"The other two, though they bore the most burthensome part in the hardships of the journey, and though they could not well have observed less or described it worse

than their companions, have not as yet favoured us with their *tales,"* &c.—*Atlas, Sun,* or *Satirist,* as it may happen. I will cut it out and send it you, when it appears.

Mind you contrive that H—— sees you before he comes away from England, for of course I shall be anxious to hear the last news, of how you were looking. Write and tell him you have something to send. He will ride over, expecting some very heavy token, such as a dozen mince-pies hermetically sealed; and you can charge him with a snow-drop. Don't blush!—of course he knows all about it. Pray how many female confidantes have you, my discreet princess? Mind you wear the same dress as in the precious miniature, that you may look the same, if possible; so that when he sees the miniature he may be able to tell me you are not altered. "Foolish boy!" Am I? I have a right to be foolish, if I please. And so, with many blessings, farewell, sweetest Mab.

LETTER II.

Seville, January 21.

I BEG pardon submissively beforehand, discreetest Mabel, for having done what I know you will consider a very rash and foolish thing.

You will please to be pacified a little by my letting you know beforehand, that I am no worse for my foolhardy behaviour; though I fear that is all the more reason why I should be scolded soundly: for I have always observed that what most disarms the indignation of those tender-hearted guardian angels that watch over the safety of our careless and headstrong sex, is that their apprehensions should be justified by some more or less fatal result.

Whether it be that such a justification of their habitual complaints against the incautious conduct of men, affords the sex more provident of peril a graceful opportunity of being generous in the triumphant realisation of one at least of their (somewhat multifarious) dark forebodings; or whether it be that pity for misfortune, and anxiety to assuage it,

leave no room in these gentle bosoms for a spirit of retrospective inculpation, I do not pretend to decide.

But I am no less aware that my offence would stand in a much more pardonable point of view if truth permitted me to preface my adventures thus:—"Don't be alarmed—I am in no immediate danger, but in a fray with robbers, &c., I received a musket-shot in the left shoulder, &c., and was brought back into Seville in a litter, quite insensible, &c."

Or even thus:—"Having been out on an expedition into the Sierra Morena, I lost my way towards sunset, and was obliged to pass the night shivering under the shelter of a clammy and dripping cavern. I was entirely wet through, before I entered it, by the torrents of rain which are not uncommon here at this season. Overpowered by weariness, I fell asleep; and woke with all my limbs stiffer than crutches. Since my return to Seville, I have been confined to my bed ten days with a sharp little fever, in which I was slightly delirious; but that is better now, though I still continue to be annoyed by a disagreeable gnawing pain in my right lung, accompanied by a slight spitting of blood—not more, however, than two or three pints or so a day—but pray don't be in the least nervous about me, for my physician

(who, by the way, is the most pottering old woman in all Spain) says I am progressing rapidly; though, in confidence, it must be confessed he has never distinctly stated whether he means I am progressing towards recovery or burial."

Though neither of these ingenious statements bears the remotest analogy to the state of the case, yet I feel sure that their mere depiction on the retina of your imagination will be of advantage to my cause, and temper the sharpness of your mental ejaculations during the perusal of my *Primera Salida.* *

It is my custom to take a walk during the hour or two before sunset—and one afternoon, having crossed Guadalquiver by the bridge of boats, connecting Seville with Triana, I passed through that suburb of gipsies, and the orange-groves which line the road beyond, and coming out upon the open country, continued my walk about half across the plain lying between the river and the western range of hills.

It is true that this plain is not more than a league in width, but I knew that if I crossed it I should want to ascend the hill, in order to look down upon

* "First Expedition."—Don Quixote's history is divided into Salidas, from Salir, to sally forth.

the beautiful city, lit with the slanting rays of sunset. Now, if I got to the top of the hill within the sunset hour, I should have to come back about five miles to Seville, in the dark. I thought of going on, and taking my chance where I slept and what became of me, and the spirit of adventure seized me there and then.

But I reflected that if I made an expedition of that sort, it would be better to set out prepared with a little money for support, my six-barrelled revolver for defence, and a more Iberian cast of get up; for as I then stood, or rather sat on the parapet of a little bridge, my costume was such as London might have looked upon without either admiration or astonishment.

Next morning after breakfast I loaded my revolver, and went out to purchase my outfit. This consisted of half a dozen filigree buttons and a faja. The faja is a scarf, usually of a scarlet woollen stuff, something like close, thick-wove bunting, about a foot wide, and varying from three and a half, to seven yards in length. This is wrapped round and round the waist, and at last tucked in beneath the folds over one of the hips, with the fringed end hanging out a little. It is a comfortable thing, giving both warmth and support

to the body. An Andalusian can no more do without his faja than a lady could cast her stays.

I returned to my lodging and dressed. A pair of black trousers and a black waistcoat (with the filigree buttons) were divided by my scarlet faja gaily striped with yellow and blue, and purple and green. I wore, besides, a seedy old black shooting-jacket; and a brown Scotch plaid with a red stripe in it slung over my shoulder to look as much like a *manta* as possible; and on my head a gigantic wide-awake, such as the peasants wear in lower Brittany, where I got it last summer. It is a good hat for a hot climate, being very thick, and having a rim about nine inches wide.

Thus attired in the costume of a nondescript vagabond, I stuck my revolver well out of sight in the folds of my faja, and sallied forth. I was in great fear lest I should meet some of my fashionable Sevillian acquaintance in this guise, but I was lucky enough to clear the gate of Triana without any such mischance. It reassured me to observe that the tag-rag and bobtail who lounge about, and sell and buy fish and vegetables on the bank of Guadalquiver, and who are very picturesque and irregular in their own attire, stared at me less

now than they were accustomed to do in my ordinary dress.

I felt a sort of independent pride in being thus tacitly admitted into the fraternity of vagabonds, whose privilege it is to avoid being stared at and begged of.

I crossed the bridge of boats, lifting my hat devoutly as I passed by the painted wooden shrine of San Josè, in the middle of it. On reaching the main street of Triana, which runs parallel with the river, I turned to the right, intending to skirt the banks, and go up to Alcala del Rio by Santi Ponce; but getting into some brick-fields and tileries, I changed my mind, and cut across to the road I had followed the day before, resolving to ascend the hill.

As I cleared the suburb, advancing across the plain and often turning, the Giralda, and then the huge body of the cathedral, appeared to rise higher and higher as smaller surrounding objects were dwarfed by distance. Hereupon I made these reflections, which, if I were destined for the church, I should reserve for a principal ornament of my first sermon on being presented to the archbishopric of Canterbury; but as I have no intention of launching upon that sea, you may use them as you see fit.

"In a city, the great cathedral attracts our attention, and lifts our eyes a moment, and is lost as we turn the corner of some insignificant little street; but as we depart from the city, the great cathedral becomes more and more its crowning point—its sole feature.

"So, in the throng and bustle of life, is religion. The greatness of God and the beauty of holiness may strike our imagination, or even lift our heart in momentary adoration, shut out of view too soon by the narrow and crooked mazes of the world's pleasures and cares.

"It is as we remove from the world, and withdraw ourselves from its cares and pleasures—it is in the departure of our faculties, and the hazy distance of old age—that the ONE object of our existence here towers up to its true proportions.

"We then perceive, perhaps too late, how much more great, and excellent, and beautiful *that* was, than those paltry intervening things which screened it from our eyes so long."

Near the foot of the hill, the *camino real* turned to the left, so I followed a bridle-road which ascended it more directly. This way, which deeply scars the steep hill-side with several channels, seems as if it must

have been worn by the footsteps of many ages, and was probably once the principal road; but it is now almost deserted, the great road, which slants more easily, having drawn the old traffic away.

From the brow there is a fine view of Seville the Marvellous, with her hundred graceful spires, gathered, as in a drawing-room of churches, around their giant and majestic queen. A silvery bend or two of the river gleamed, folded on the purple bosom of the plain. I sat down, partly because I wanted to take a sketch, and partly because I was out of breath with toiling up the rise, and felt a slight pain in my lungs. However, I managed to draw my breath better than my landscape. But the pain in my lungs had reminded me I was mortal, and liable to accidents; and indeed when one is alone, and far away from help, a very slight ailment is sufficient to act upon the imagination. So, before proceeding further, in order to be prepared for the worst that could happen, I wrote, as legibly as I could, a short notice in the fly-leaf of my pocket-book, setting forth, in a proclamatory style, "who I was, and what was to be done with my body, in case it should be found by well-disposed persons, who would be handsomely rewarded, &c."

Proceeding a little along the road, I came to a small village, where I inquired my way to Castilleja de la Cuesta of a crusty old man; who, finding I came from Seville, scolded me severely for coming so much out of the right road, as if it was anything to him. What disconcerted me more than the snarling of the old man was, that all the dogs barked after me as I passed through the village, indicating that there was something peculiar and suspicious about my appearance.

The aloe-bordered lane into which I had turned, ran along the brow of the hill, and after about half a league, descended into Castilleja, a pretty little village (where Fernando Cortez departed this life, as I since found in the guide book, which I should have done better to study before I set out), in a hollow of the *cuesta* (hill-side). Here I met a beggar, and asked my way to Santi Ponce. Reflecting that I should not have inquired of such a person if I had overtaken instead of meeting him, I amused myself by fashioning the reason why into a *refrain*.

No preguntes tu camino
De mezquino—
Que quiza has de tenerlo
Compañero.

Never, in asking your way,
Question a tatterdemallion,
Who, on informing you, may
Offer to be your companion.

Turning to the left at the lower end of the village, the path slanted across abruptly undulating spurs of the cuesta, down toward the plain again; and descending upon Cama, the tall towers of Santi Ponce's convent appeared about four miles to the north. I had heard that there was a little village about half a mile beyond the convent, and there I resolved to sleep. As I stepped along briskly (for I was beginning to feel very hungry towards my usual dinner-hour), the sun gradually descended; the shadow of the western range widened across the plain, and rose like a deepening flood of darkness, leaving only the church towers, and *atalayahs* * illuminated; and by the time I reached the village, twilight had drawn its rapidly deepening film over all the broad valley which *Bætis* waters.

Santi Ponce is a poor-looking, low-hutted hamlet, sprinkled on some knolly undulations of the plain. Many of the small houses are flat-roofed, and it has rather the look of a desolate little eastern town than of a European village.

I had to go right through it, running the gauntlet of women, children, and dogs in great numbers, to whom I afforded a fertile source of speculation,

* Moorish watch-towers.

remark, and rebark. At length I reached the posada at the further extremity of the place, not in any street, but facing the open country. There was a large doorway without a door, inside of which the vestibule looked very much like a waggon shed. Further in, appeared a long, narrow room, if room it could be called; the walls being of rough, unplastered stone, smoke-blackened like those of a forge, and the window without glass.

This receptacle, such as it was, proved to be the kitchen of the establishment, and the family were seated at supper round a table at the further end. A flaring little lamp lit up the swarthy faces of the party, making their dim shadows waver upon the walls. Altogether the scene was more picturesque than comfortable.

I walked up to the table and saluted them with "Dios guard' Vmdes. Caballeros" (God keep you, gentlemen), and proceeded to make inquiries what there was to be had for supper. The landlady, to whom I was referred, apathetically announced that there was nothing whatever in the house; but the rest of the party supping, begged me to be seated, and sup with them. The elements before them were nothing more than bread, and a large salad bowl with some remains

of lettuce floating in much vinegar and water, dotted with little yellow blebs of oil. I was too hungry to stand on ceremony, and sat down at once. They gave me a great hunch of bread and a wooden spoon, and I followed the example of the company, dipping in the dish and eating the sopped bread, with such shreds and tatters of lettuce as I could fish up with my spoon.

When all the *verdura* (green stuff) was finished, the bowl was passed round, and one after another, tilting it up, took a long drink. One of the men, as he put it down with a gasp, remarked that it was a capital thing to refresh the blood (*rifrescar la sangre*).

My hunger was by no means satisfied; but examining the table more narrowly after the party had risen, all except myself and the *mozo de la cuadra* (ostler), I discovered a small plate covered over with an inverted saucer. This concealed treasure was a fractional reserve of olla, set aside for the supper of the landlady's little girl, as I discovered without much compunction after it had been devoured; for I fell upon it without asking questions, though it smelt and tasted powerfully of garlic. The landlady now bethought herself to ask me if I would have a *jarro* (pitcher) of wine and some olives. With the aid of these accessaries and more bread, I

managed at last to replenish the vacuum which a long walk (about twelve miles) had caused in my vitals.

The jarro held more than I could drink, so I shared it with the mozo, a polite, hard-featured man, who seemed above his station in point of intelligence. He spoke French, and said he had been exiled for his political opinions, and had lived at Bayonne.

It was beginning to be cold, and they lighted a blazing fire; not in any fireplace, but on the mud floor opposite the window, which aperture had more the effect of blowing the smoke about into all parts of the kitchen than of letting any out. Meanwhile a large party of exceedingly outlandish figures in zamarras, and sheepskin breeches, and red stockings, and leggings of *panno pardo*, had arrived, and were busy about preparing their supper.

They produced a certain number of what, by the uncertain firelight, seemed to be triangular pieces of thin board. These they stuffed into the flame, and held them there a little while; then taking them out, and bending and breaking them up, I discovered that they were dried fish, which they were singeing thus to soften previous to stewing. I asked what it was called, and being told that it was *bacalao*, rejoiced greatly that I had at least seen what Don Quixote

supped upon in the venta, the first night of his *Primera Salida.*

These men told me they were come with several *carros* (waggons) of wool from Estremadura, and, hearing I was an Englishman, concluded I was going to the copper-mines at Rio Tinto. They admired my manta, and asked where it was made, and what it cost.

I asked if I could have a cup of chocolate before I went to bed. The mozo went out and bought a cake, and the posadera made it in a copper pot, stirring it with a stick stuck into a nicked wooden wheel at the bottom, which she trundled—rolling the protruding handle between the palms of her hands. The chocolate was good, but as to going to bed, that was not feasible, for there was none.

The unusualness of the requirement appeared from the fact, that by this time the greater part of the wool-carriers were strewn about here and there on the mud floor of the windy vestibule; some of them without even a manta to lie upon. I did not feel that this would exactly suit me, and began to make inquiries about the straw-loft. "Oh yes, there was a pajár,—would his worship like to inspect it?" A ladder was brought, and set up against a wall in the stable-yard,

up which went the polite mozo with his flaring lamp, and I followed.

A straw-loft does not sound an uncomfortable place to sleep in; and if you have long straw you cannot be better off: but the straw here was short, that is to say, cut into bits about half an inch long, to mix with barley, and my prospect for the night's accommodation looked more like a great heap of loose chaff than anything else. The ostler remarked that it was "una condicion muy suelta para acostar" (very loose stuff to lie among), but, if I liked to sleep here, he would get a couple of sacks to lay over it. Having got these, we shook several avalanches off the brow of the crumbling mountain, from which the slightest touch would loosen an armful, and send it rustling down. We strewed a plain below, and spread the two broad sacks. I drew my plaid over me, the mozo bid me sleep well, and, taking away the lamp, left me to my reflections.

The pajár had a doorway but no door, and the aperture afforded plenty of fresh air and a favourable view of the constellation Cassiopeia. I was, nevertheless, quite warm enough, and should have been in perfect tranquillity but for the fear of chopped straw falling into my eyes, nose, and mouth, if I

stirred otherwise than very gingerly. Still, to set off against this drawback, there certainly was some romance in sleeping in a real straw-loft, a dream of adventure I had never put in act before.

I dare say when I have made my great expedition with H——, this will seem very flat and commonplace; and yet when I contrast my English experience of hostelries—when I call to mind those civilised abominations, the tap, the coffee-room, tea and muffins, and mutton-chops; wound up by a simpering chambermaid, a carpeted staircase, a japan candlestick, and a chintz four-poster—I cannot but remark a very striking difference between this picture and that.

And in what does the romantic consist, but in unfamiliarity? It would be as much a romance to the beggar to be clothed in fine linen, and treated, by some mistake, as a great lord, as for the great lord to dress himself in rags, and try the life of a beggar by way of a change. The only difference is, that one changes for the better, the other for the worse. The advantage in point of romance is clearly all on the side of the beggar.

This is the reason why heroes of romance are usually born under strong suspicion of illegitimacy—

begin as vagabonds, and turn out peers of the realm in the third volume. This accounts for the delight snobs take in writing, and the populace in reading, dark and mysterious romances of fashionable life, which fashionable livers, according to their (wax) lights, find neither dark nor mysterious at all. For the same cause the fashionable world delights in the low life so poetically portrayed and idealised by Dickens. Thackeray, a much greater artist, though perhaps not so great a genius, would be far more popular both above and below the gilded stairs of society, if he did not describe high and low life with such vivid and hard-lined accuracy. These excellent studies from nature are the delight of artists who have learnt to love nature and truth better than ideal generalisations; but the stupid public very much prefer to wonder at strange and exaggerated improbabilities, unlike what they or anybody else have ever seen.

Having been delivered of these reflections in the straw, I was falling gradually into that drowsy twilight of reason which intervenes between the setting of the mind's eye and the star-spangled darkness of dreams, when a vivacious discussion was opened in the court below, in which the word *paja* (straw)

frequently recurred: pending which I fell asleep with my revolver under my hand, ready for defence in case of danger.

I don't know how long I had been asleep, when I was suddenly startled by the bump of a ladder against the wall; and, opening my eyes, saw the constellation of Cassiopeia darkened by the figure of a man. I sat up with my pistol ready, but he passed by me; and, filling a large *estera* (matting) basket with straw, departed as he came. He had doubtless been the applicant for straw, whom the friendly mozo had attempted to persuade not to disturb me, but who had now found the ladder, and come to right himself against such oppression.

Falling asleep again, I dreamed I had been out on some wild expedition in England, and had been brought back quite helpless on a shutter—that I had been put to bed, and indeed the nurse was tucking me up, when, in stooping to arrange the pillow, her sleeves tickled my nose, on which I woke, and rubbing my nose, frightened away a rat who had been snuffing round my face, probably suggesting the idea of being tucked up. He scampered away, making a great rustling among the loose straw; and I perceived the darkness was growing pale, and that it

wanted not above an hour of sunrise. So I did not go to sleep again; and when it was light enough to see, got up and shook myself.

I paid a peseta (about 10½d.) for my supper and night's lodging. After about half a mile of road, I saw on the left of the road some stony excrescences among the olive trees, towards which I turned up a slope of barley field. The irregular masses of grouting proved, as I approached, to be undermined and perforated by arched cellars and passages. Scrambling in among these ruins of Italica I found at length the amphitheatre, which is oval, and not near so large as a modern bull-ring.

On the side by which I entered there were remains of a broad passage, vaulted with a semi-circular arch. which had once surrounded the amphitheatre, into which there were entrances from it very much like those of a *plaza de toros*. Here, no doubt, the Roman youth of the period loitered between the acts and smoked their cigarillos (or did whatever in those days corresponded with this modern *délassement*) while the last wounded gladiator was dying behind the scenes; and made their bets while the next pair were buckling on their armour. The broken terraces of stone seats remain, but the grass grows

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green, for the benefit of a few scrambling goats, in the arena.

It is natural to fill up the blank gap which time has made, with imagination's reproduction of the gaiety, eagerness and agony of victims who bled, and crowds who shouted, where now reign the silence and solitude and ruin of near two thousand years. But what prevented my indulging very long in these musings on the past was, that I began to be very hungry for my breakfast; so scrambling out of the city founded by Scipio, and the birthplace of Trajan, I returned to the road; and, following it still to the northward, came before long to a small venta, with a broad shed of thatch supported on posts in front of it.

Here I found a woman sitting over an earthenware *copa* of charcoal, and asked for breakfast. She set bread and wine and a great pie-dish full of large salted sardines before me. Cold fish is a favourite food of the poor people here, and with excellent bread (which you get everywhere in Spain, I believe, but especially in the neighbourhood of Seville), a few olives, and a jar of decent manzanilla, my cold sardines were by no means a contemptible breakfast, for which I paid five-pence.

While I was eating, a soldier came in; and I had a sort of vague impression that this road-guard would find me in the wrong some way, and take me up. He turned out a good-humoured fellow, coming not on a domiciliary visit, but to get his breakfast. He and the landlady had a considerable gossip, of which I, being a novelty, formed the staple subject. You will perhaps be surprised at the *ventera's* taste, but I can assure you I overheard her remark that I was a very pretty youth, "y que rubios tiene los cabellos" (and what nice red hair and beard). Now, though I was obliged to her for the compliment of thinking me a pretty youth, I don't so much appreciate having my hair called red. As to my beard, I have been accustomed to consider it of a somewhat ferruginous straw colour; but my hair is brown, and has never been called red by my bitterest enemies.

The soldier, before I went away, civilly insinuated that he should like to see my passport, and was highly delighted and edified by the engraving of the arms of England, and those of Lord Palmerston. "As to the writing, he could read the letters," he said, "but as to the words, being written in English, they were far from being perspicuous: and, indeed, he had been informed that there was no language in

the world so clear and intelligible as the Castillian," to which the ventera, as if she was assenting to an ingenious philological theory, replied "mas claro" (doubtless). They settled, also, between them, that I was, without doubt, a pottery-man from the English porcelain manufactory in the Cartuja convent.

I now bid the ventera and *militar*, "quedar se con Dios" (remain with God), and they bid me go under his protection. These pious salutations and farewells are in everybody's mouth. If two men meet on the road, each says in passing, "Vaya Vmd. con Dios" (may your worship go with God). If you pass a man standing by the side of the road, you cry, "Dios guard' Vmd." (God keep your worship). The same salutation is good on entering a posada, only you put their worships in the plural (Vmdes). They reply, "Venga Vmd. con Dios" (may your worship come with God). And when you depart, your farewell is, "Queden Vmdes con Dios."

Soon after leaving the venta I turned off the main road, along a bridle-way slanting to the right, and leading to a village with a white tower. The path was crossed by a stream six or seven yards wide and a foot deep. A peasant appeared unforeseenly, and offered to carry me across for a halfpenny; but I

thought it would be derogatory to my vagabond character to accept his services; so taking off my shoes and stockings, and doubling up my trousers, I waded in. About the middle I found it rather deeper than I had calculated, and in twitching up a corner of my plaid, which was trailing in the water, one of my shoes dropped, and was floating away in the ripples; when, making a dash for it, I lost one of my socks, and gained the further bank only one dry foot better than if I had walked through. The peasant whose services I had rejected grinned over my misfortunes as a judgment upon my parsimony.

I shook the water out of my shoe and wrung the sock as dry as I could, and sat down on a sunny bank scruffling my feet in the warm sand; for dry sand will soak up water as it does ink, and supply the place of a towel as well as blotting-paper. By the time I had made and smoked a cigarillo, the powerful sun of January had dried the sock to a wearable state, and I proceeded to the village of the white watch-tower, whose name is Algaba, which passing without adventure, I came after a while to the banks of Guadalquivir.

It now became matter of debate whether I should ascend the river to Alcala (which was now in sight,

but much further off than it looked, because of an awkward bend of the river, unless I could find means of crossing it in two places) or descend it to Seville. I was beginning to be footsore, and felt dusty and unclean. On the one hand was the desire of adventures—on the other, the desire of washing, clean linen, and rest for the soles of my feet. Alcala del Rio, crowning a steep bank, was not without attraction to my eyes; but the noes! had it, and I turned down stream towards the Giralda, which seemed nine or ten miles distant.

While I was wandering wearily along the bank, a boat came ploughing up the stream with a fresh breeze full behind a great belly of white canvas. The steady, easy-going motion made me wish to be on board, sitting at leisure to be blown along to fresh adventures. Not long after came another, and I had more than half a mind to hail her, and see whether they would take me up to Alcala.

Against this project there was the uncertainty whether they would go as far; whether the wind would not be contrary in the next reach, and whether they would stop for me if I asked them. Besides which, it was to be considered that I was weary and footsore, and in want of washing and

clean linen, and should probably be still more so, and still less fit to prosecute my adventures on the morrow, when I might find myself, perhaps, quite knocked up, at a considerable distance from home.

These considerations only lasted long enough for the boat to sail by; and by the time she was fairly out of my reach, I was very sorry I had been so irresolute and prudent. I determined that I was destined to go by a third and luckier boat, for which, however, I did not think it wise to wait here, in case it should never come. Continuing to approach Seville by the bank, I came at last to a reed hut. Here were an old man and woman, and a little boy about twelve.

They were sitting round a smouldering wood fire which burnt upon a circular mud hearth, sunk in the floor like the mouth of a well, and about a foot and a half deep—so that the edges of the floor served to sit upon, while the feet of the family rested upon the sunken hearth. They made me welcome, and the fisherman asked what he could do for me. I said I was waiting for a boat to take me up to Alcala, and should be happy to avail myself of the shelter of his roof, and

should be much obliged to him if he would stop the next boat for me, whether up or down stream, for I was indifferent whether I went to Alcala or Seville.

I got a drink of water and lay down on a great heap of nets, which would have been a more comfortable couch but for the cork floats. The fisherman went out to watch for sails. His wife was stitching away at a very ragged pair of trousers, belonging to the little boy. It appeared, nevertheless, that they were his best; for, during the operation, he sat shivering without any, and encouraging his mother to make haste.

I asked her whether her husband caught many fish and what sort, and whether he made a good living? She said "that they were very poor and wretched now, because *el buen Dios* had sent no rain;" I did not see precisely how dry weather could make them poor, but she continued: "when the rain falls and there is a fresh in the river, then the *savàlo* (shad) comes up from the sea in great plenty; but now the river is so low, he can catch nothing at all."

Having answered my questions, she began to interrogate me in return, as to my nation, and what I was. She admired the good condition of my

clothes, saying they were *muy decentes*, so that I was evidently not shabby enough for a real vagabond. I rested in the hut about two hours, when, as no boat appeared, I took my leave of the picturesque hut and its equally picturesque inhabitants, giving the old woman a silver real.

This sum, which is a shade more than twopence-halfpenny, seemed to strike the whole family in heaps of gratitude and astonishment. The old woman said they had done nothing to deserve it, and the fisherman begged me to let him put me across the river in his boat, that he might earn it with some shadow of justice. But the shortest way to Seville did not cross the river here, so I begged him to accept it *amistosamente* (in a friendly manner), and he might put me across in his boat some other day, when I returned on my way to Alcala. I had previously won the little boy's heart with a few cigarillos, so that I departed with a greater mass of genuine goodwill and hearty benedictions than I suppose are usually purchased for twopence-halfpenny.

Cutting across the fields to another angle of the river, I passed it in the ferry-boat and trudged home to Seville, where I arrived in time to dress for

dinner. My landlady, Juliana, had almost given me up for lost, and Señor Vasquez, my Spanish master, had afforded her very little consolation, merely *carambaing* about the rashness of Britons and the ruffianly character of the natives in the neighbourhood of Seville.

After dinner I went, as usual, to get my coffee at the casino, where my friends raised their eyebrows some inches at the recital of my adventures. One of them wondered why I had not told him, and he would have taken me in his carriage and four to see the ruins of Italica. But Ramon Ponce de Leon, who is a young man of some genius, and of an adventurous spirit, said it was an "*expedicion muy graciosa,* and it was natural I should wish to see the sort of life of which I had read in Don Quixote and Quevedo," an idea which most of the party seemed scarcely to see the force of when it was explained. The romance of their lives is generally to become as European and un-Spanish as possible. It is one of the privileges of imagination to perceive the romantic element in what is familiar. Perhaps the greatest triumph of the genius of Cervantes was in laying the scene of the best romance ever written, in the immediate neighbourhood of his own home.

We adjourned to the opera and saw the troublesome *Suppositi*, which is wearisomely popular.

All to-day I have been writing vigorously to give your ladyship an account of my expedition, which, by its length and perseverance, is enough of itself to prove that my health is no worse. I only hope you may read the account with like immunity as to your patience. I am sorry now that I missed my destiny, by not taking the boat up the river—are not you sorry too? To be sure you might have had twice as tedious a relation to wade through; but then I can't help thinking I should have had better adventures at Alcala.

Yours &c.

LETTER III.

Seville, Feb. 9, 1852.

He did arrive, dearest Mab, and on the very day. I had a presentiment, but I was afraid to trust it for fear of being disappointed, as one always is when hope is allowed to run riot. I had calculated the days of his voyage to a nicety, and found he must get to Cadiz before the river steamer of the 5th came up the Guadalquivir. Therefore it was now or perhaps never, for there were some doubts latterly of his being able to get off on the 27th after all.

I was determined not to go down to the quay early, for I felt sure my impatience, waiting on the spot, would prevent his arriving. I had inquired, in my morning walk, what was the steamer's hour, and determined to hit it exactly. Rushing down at the appointed moment I found my informant had told me wrong; the boat had arrived a quarter of an hour.

On the quay (down a broad sloping causeway, railed off from the public), there was a pile of luggage. A remnant of passengers yet bustled around it, arguing, struggling, and bargaining with a contentious company of porters. Alas! H—— was not to be seen among them. There was still a chance; he might be one of the passengers who had got ashore before my coming down, and I was just preparing to rush back to the city to ransack the hotels. Just then an internal convulsion shook the swarm around the luggage pile; out burst a little Gallego staggering under a huge British portmanteau, and followed by its much desired, and now almost despaired-of proprietor.

I saw him come bowling up the slope with his familiar gait, evidently unconscious of my presence, and wearing that sturdy and almost hostile demeanour with which a true Briton marches into a strange city through the army of officious importunates who never fail to welcome the true Briton's arrival. As he passed the barrier, he came close to me in the crowd, still without recognising me, for though straight before his nose, I was dressed in the costume of the people. I touched his elbow, and he turned upon me with a look of

impatient defiance, thinking me one persecutor more.

How quickly the expression changed, and to what, I leave you to imagine. We rushed into each other's arms, as much as the many great coats slung over his shoulders and the deep folds of cloak in which I was enveloped would mutually permit. Then saying more than a thousand things in a breath, or rather in no breath at all, we set off in great glee for my lodgings, forgetting in the excitement the poor little porter who was following us at full trot, panting and puffing under the heavy portmanteau. We got home, but were no calmer. We dined, but could not eat. We talked, but the news could not be persuaded to come out quick enough.

Of course, my first and most headlong (heartlong I should say) inquiries were after my faëry queen. He heartlessly replied that my Mab was considered likely to live. By some accident I discovered he had a letter from you; ah, prudish! enclosing the snowdrop you were ashamed to give him in a straight-forward, open-handed way. However, by that means I got a letter too; thanks for both.

I, of course, on hearing of a letter, started up

and stirred him up to open the heavy portmanteau forthwith. Then it turned out that in the flurry of custom-house examinations the key had been lost, and I had to wait, execrating the whole administration of imports in all the Spains, while a locksmith was sent for. Equally, of course, you will imagine my transports over the letter, and how many times I kissed the poor withered little flower of colder climes, and wondered how the deuce I could have been so stupid as not to send you a violet in my last; but I had no idea, when I thoughtlessly asked you to send me a snowdrop, of the real pleasure it has given me.

How vague and dim is the vaunted imagination of poets. I have always said that the strong point of the female mind, about which we have so often quarrelled, is imagination. What a pretty thought it was of you, my Mab, to save me up a leaf of the Christmas holly-wreaths (with which, by the way, I pricked my fingers in the hurry of taking it and the snowdrop out of the doubled card).

"Before the face of Winter stern
I fled to seek a sunnier clime—
I miss'd the merry Christmas time—
I saw no crackling yule-log burn.

"Twin greeting sends the grey old chief—
To mind us he has flowers that blow,
And foliage green among the snow—
A snowdrop and a holly leaf.

"Oh, monarch grim! thy realms of ice
Keep for me yet a fairer flower—
Where memories green of home embower
Thy dearth into a paradise."

Shall I write you any more? I think these three stanzas are plenty. Do you know that Tennyson's favourite stanza has been used in Spain three hundred years. But I think nobody in Spain, or anywhere else, has written so much of it or so well as *In memoriam.* I have my copy here, and sometimes read, with much sentiment, the choice passages marked by your approving pencil. You remember how I used to teaze you about marking them, begging you in vain to translate into plain English those dark passages which usually had struck you most; for your mysterious sex have always a wonderful fancy for things they only half comprehend. However, having infamously contrived to make you ashamed of your modest annotations, I persuaded you to give me the depreciated copy; and now I reap the pleasant reward of my dishonesty and am ashamed too.

Last night, after writing the first half of this letter—for though a man of letters I seldom have

literary stamina to finish one at a stretch—we remembered we had told the tower-keepers to be prepared for a visit from us at ten o'clock, to see Seville by moonlight from the Giralda. Therefore we sallied forth beneath the stars.

Having come to where that wonderful wand, lifted by the magic hand of the Moor, points whither all pinnacles, whether of mosque or cathedral, do point, however much the way to heaven may differ on the lower story, we entered the dwelling at its base where some of the family were going to bed. A young man got ready a lantern, and leading us through a sloppy back-kitchen and other damp premises, preceded us up the succession of inclined planes which ascend the tower.

Imagine an interminable sloping gallery in the wall, corkscrewing round and round the tower, or rather square and square, with landing places at the corners, and here and there large niches where two Arabesque arches, divided by a slender column of glittering marble, let in the night thwarted by the graceful balustrade of a jutting balcony.

The dark ascent of the echoing corridor—the cloaked figure of our guide ahead, with the moving downcast flare of his lantern on the stony slope—

these richly framed, momentary pictures of the enchanted moonlight-sprinkled city, as from glimpse to glimpse it sank beneath our feet and exposed a widening rim or hazy horizon—all these things together struck us with that delicate impression of the mysterious and romantic which is so difficult to put on paper, or even to describe afterwards with spoken words. We were content to explain ourselves to each other by agreeing that it seemed like one of the Arabian nights. Does that give your ladyship an idea?

Well, there is an end to all things, even to square corkscrews, and at last we emerged where the muezzin used to cry, "*La ela illa Allah*" (There is no God but *the* God), and where now the most powerfully unmusical jangle of bells in the world ring at random hours without any ascertainable rule or intention whatever. Looking down over the dizzy parapet on one side we could see here and there little cloaked mannikins crawling over the straitened pavement; on the other, also far beneath, the great stone roofs of the body of the cathedral, whose massive flying buttresses, touched by the moonbeams, seemed the hoary ribs of some huge old Mammoth-skeleton.

Around, irregularly grouped clusters of quaint fantastic housetops, and towers, and gables strung like charms on tangled street-lines, expanded a chequered labyrinth. Along the dark line of the Guadalquivir lay the white range of Triana. On this side of the river, but still distant, the bull-ring looked about the shape and size of a quoit. On the left, near the foot of the tower, stood the rich Arabesque alcazar of the Moorish kings of Seville. Beyond, spread a vaster edifice, square, covering five or six acres, and seeming a palace too. What do you think it was? The tobacco manufactory. Isabel II. is the sole tobacconist in her realm, and as all its denizens are her customers she must do a very good business.

Beyond the orange and lemon groves of the *Delicias*, the watery serpent coiled away along the plain, with here and there a distant reach that caught the silver of the skies. Going round to the east side of the tower, where, by the way, we came out but did not stop, (deeming, with that restless impatience to which humanity is prone, that what first presented itself must be least worth looking at,) we beheld in the far horizon the converging ranges of the Sierra Morena and the mountains of Ronda.

The dim intervening plain was dotted here and there with bright towers, that rose against the slanting rays. The moon was full, and such a moon! You, my dear, have only seen a comparative turnip-lantern. I am sure you are tired of my description, and completely confused between right and left and the four points of the compass; suffice it to say (I know you like these useful little brickbats of a professional literary style), suffice it to say, that we were much delighted and properly enthusiastic. We picked out the largest tooth of the Ronda *sierra* (saw), I don't mean that we extracted it, but we singled it out as the loftiest point in the horizon, whither to direct our steps when we leave this place. We have determined to take no guide, but to ride from peak to peak, always selecting the most ambitious land-mark we can get sight of, and trusting to Providence for supper and adventures.

Farewell, &c.

LETTER IV.

Seville, Feb. 21, 1852.

Oh! to be sure, you are delighted with the description of Seville by moonlight; and then say, like a wicked, sly, sarcastic pet of a Mabsy, that it was "as fine as if it had been written for a magazine." Of course, I take your very doubtful compliment as if it were meant for a real one: and so you think I should take more pains with my style for a stupid ungrateful public, than for my most precious of cruel and fastidious little critics.

I have a great mind to disconvince you very unpleasantly, but first I think it fair to warn you that you had better burn, or otherwise make away with, such letters as I may write to you from Spain; for if ever, on my return, I lay hands on them, they shall go plump into our book, line for line, and word for word, and serve to plumpen the two voluminous volumes. I am aware it will be a great struggle for

you to destroy such interesting documents, but if you don't, see if *I* don't.

Or they shall go into some widely circulated magazine, whose readers will wonder and inquire "who that little minx Mab could be that got such a quantity of charming epistles from an interesting invalid in Spain." And then those dear, disagreeable, curious Miss D——s, who are such a comfort to your neighbourhood, and who read every magazine and review in the old, new, and middle-aged world, will find your name and turn over with their (pitch-) forked tongues all the Mabels they ever knew (and remember it is not a very common name); they will put their heads together in a most choice study for a caricaturist, and pick out circumstantial evidence from the unguarded text, and worry you with fishing inuendos to the end of your days; or at least till such time as you make me most happy by consenting to change your neighbourhood, for anywhere within fifty miles of those old maids I am *resolved* never to settle down.

As you like the moonlight, I have a great mind to give you another dose in a midnight ramble through the streets, with vistas, and clair-obscures, and shady angles, and salient corners, and arches, and columns,

and twinkling lights, and serenaders with tinkling guitars, and señoritas robed in white, waving cambric kerchiefs from balconies, and watchmen crying, "Ave Maria puriiiiisimaaaaaa," to a narrow strip of stars peeping down between the leaning eaves.

But I will let you off with the alarm I have given you, lest I should go on; for I have a great deal to say, and not much time to say it in. Indeed I ought now to be busy arranging and separating my goods and chattels, some to stay here, and some to go with us in our *alforjas* (saddle-bags). We are to start now in a day or two, having got our beasts of burden. Mine I bought of a baker, a good trade to buy a horse from! Why? he is likely to be the better bred—a joke. I cannot describe him now, but I dare say I shall have plenty to say about him on the road. He is a charming, vicious, little black beauty, and the livery man, who has the charge of him, says he is a "demonio" in the stable.

H—— has got a more peaceable chestnut,—both seem good and sound. During these our last days in Seville, the population has been in a hubbub of rejoicing for the Queen's happy delivery from her physicians and priest; it cannot be ascertained from which she ran the greater risk, since her constitution

(can it be a Spanish one?) has weathered both. Indeed, it seems the assassin's dose of steel has operated as a tonic, she has got well so fast. Do you turn up your delicately chiselled nose at the dose of steel as a "witticism only fit for a vulgar newspaper?" Come now, you cannot deny that it was a pointed application.

"How can I waste my time and paper on such stuff when I have plenty to say?" Well, I will oblige you with a narration of our yesterday's amusement. As a humane way of rejoicing for the Queen's escape, there was, among other things, a bull-fight: and, like naughty, cruel wretches, we went to see it. You must have read at least a dozen "Bullfights in Seville," each time vowing never to wade through the blood, and horror, and dulness of another. I will, therefore, endeavour to make mine as short and disgusting as my powers of condensation will admit.

An arena about a hundred yards in diameter, girt by a sloping amphitheatre and half surrounded above by arched and columned galleries, is filled by twelve thousand men, women and children, all impatient. A score or so of men, arrayed in scarlet and yellow and purple and pink and green and blue, embroidered and laced and frogged and

tasselled and tagged with gold and silver and silk, are strutting about upon the sand.

There is a flourish of trumpets. A door is opened in the wooden barrier, which defends the lower benches of spectators, and in rushes a broad-nosed, innocent, astonished-looking bull. He looks here and there and round about him, and has every reason to be surprised if not alarmed. The men in gaudy colours at first keep a respectful distance, and observe whether he is very fierce: then the boldest of them goes forward. The foolish bull now thinks he has discovered his principal enemy, and canters towards him with the full intention of playing cup and ball with his body on the points of his horns.

As the bull reaches him the bully flings out his cloak and skips aside, so that the horns impinge on nothing but a cloud of floating drapery. Sometimes it is carried away on the points, and the disappointed beast shakes it off his face, and gores and tramples it in the dust. The other men do the same as the first, with more or less agility, and there is a good deal of running about and jumping over the barriers, into which the pursuer comes full tilt. The public are soon tired of these first performers, who are called the *burladores* (jokers) or *chulillos*.

Then come in the *bandarilleros*. Each man has a pair of barbed javelins, wreathed and rosetted with gay-coloured strips of paper. The first performer places himself in front of the bull, standing with his heels together and leaning slightly forward: he waves his rustling wands, something in the manner of lagrace sticks, or as if he were fortifying his challenge by some magnetic spell, for he points his weapons toward the forehead of his antagonist and traces mysterious diagrams in the air.

The bull, as if some superstitious element in his character were awakened by these exorcisms, usually pauses some moments to contemplate this double-wanded wizard, the first man who has faced him yet, without the aid of that bewildering volubility of cloak. At length the bull starts like an express-train, and the bandarillero runs lightly forward to meet him, like a dancing-master in pumps caught in a shower. As they meet he skips nimbly aside on light fantastic toe, planting in the same instant his pair of bandarillas on either side of the poor beast's neck. The rest do likewise, till he has a great stiff mane of javelins tossing up and down as he plunges about, bellowing in great agony, with the barbs working in his flesh at a great leverage.

Then another flourish of trumpets, and in come the picadores on their blindfold steeds, wearing a broad-brimmed stiffish wide-awake with many-coloured plumes, their legs cased in buff-leather and wood, entrenched in a tall buttressed fortification of saddle, and armed with a stout lance. One of them challenges the bull, poising his heavy weapon under his arm. The bull butts at him and receives the lance's point between the neck and shoulder. The point is guarded so as not to pierce more than an inch or two; there is then a desperate pushing bout, the man and bull thrusting for safety and for vengeance at either end. When the struggle lasts long it is called "dormir sobre el palo" (to sleep upon the stick).

At last the bull either goes away disheartened, or forcing in the picador's guard, gores the horse deeply in the flank as he swerves away. The other picadores do likewise. The noble patient horses go on at this work, bleeding bucketfuls all the time, and some of them with their torn-out entrails in festoons, till they drop down fainting from loss of blood. Lying flat they do not bleed so fast, and recover their consciousness to receive an occasional lift from the sharp horns, as the bull in pursuit of his persecutors recognises in his path the corse of a fallen foe.

When the bull is getting tired the company call for the *matador*. He is the smartest of the party. He marches solemnly forward to make his bow in front of the president's balcony, throws away his hat and goes forth to slay and make an end. His victim, sated with fruitless victory over superior numbers, and weary of bloodshed, has to be provoked with many flouts and indignities before he will deign to engage in this single-handed and, seemingly, insignificant combat.

At last he comes. The matador whips a long gleaming rapier out of the scarlet flag with which he draws the beast's attention to his left, while stepping to the right he plunges his sword through the left shoulder down into the heart. For a few moments the bull staggers about, snorting little crimson clouds, seeming bewildered by the new sensation of dying. He soon feels how it is, and goes majestically down on his knees, with his bold, broad face of honest defiance towards his destroyer.

The butcher now runs up behind and strikes him with his knife in the back of the head: the spine is separated and he rolls over and dies. A flourish of trumpets—a buzz of twelve thousand voices criticising his end—and a team of four mules abreast are

harnessed to the carcase. They gallop out, while the music sounds again, dragging by the heels along the sand the Hector of the ring, leaving a long wake of dust-cloud behind.

So it ends, and begins again. Some of the bulls are more savage than others. One declined to fight, and the indignant populace called for dogs to worry him. Another, in making a sudden turn upon his enemies, dislocated his spine and lost the use of his hind legs. The poor creature could not tell what was the matter, and struggled about with his fore-legs, dragging the paralysed remainder of himself along the ground.

We sat and smoked, and were not so much horrified as would suit the ideas of a British public, nor so much excited as would flatter a Spanish one, but we were occasionally both one and the other to a moderate degree. They say that this is child's-play, because the bulls are feeble and tame now in the cool weather. After all, in spite of the atrocity of the thing, it is a fine sight, and there is enough of the savage, wild-beast element in the heart of man to make these desperate and bloody struggles interesting to him.

What I felt to be more objectionable than the

bloodshed was, that the bull had not fair play, nor any chance of escape. Besides which, poetical justice demanded that there should be a fair equivalent of men killed in proportion to the horses. I felt at the time, I should have liked to be a good, strong, active bull, aware of the stratagems of the art, to have made havoc among the gawdy bullies, and I believe we should have shouted with all the rest of the company if one of the human wretches had been caught and mangled.

I am aware that I am a horrid inhuman wretch myself; so what more have you got to say? I have given you what critics would call "this graphic, but somewhat cold-blooded sketch, affording a vivid idea of the disgusting details," &c. However, it is fair to say, that there were no men hurt, and if there had, our human would probably have overpowered our brutal sympathies.

As we are prepared to set out in a day or two, heavily armed with pistols, and determined not to surrender except to overwhelming numbers of banditti, we thought it prudent to sit up last night to make our wills. After remembering all our friends and disposing of all our valuables, in case we should be relieved from the want of them, we found it was

past five in the morning. "The lady I most love," you may be interested to hear, will at my demise stand seised of all my luck-money (which I wear suspended round my neck by a velvet band), with the gold-ring on which the coins are strung.

They consist of a half and quarter guinea of GEO. III.; a gold crown piece of CHAS. I.; a plump little silver coin of the Greek colony at Tarentum; a thin ditto of the Moorish kingdom of Cordova; a silver twopenny piece of ALEX. I. of Scotland; a brazen coin of Antiochus (founder of Antioch), a general of Alexander the Great; a Roman coin lately in circulation at Seville as an ochavo; and a Turkish coin, brought from Syria by poor Charley, when Napier took Acre. You see there are three of gold, three of silver, and three of copper; and I have a strong belief that my luck depends on carrying them about me,—foolish indeed!

I write after coming home from the fireworks, which were let off from the new iron-bridge over the Guadalquiver, which is to be opened to-morrow. We, with a large party of our Spanish friends, saw everything to great advantage from a barge on the river. Such a mass of many-coloured fire on the dappled mirror of the flowing waters, with dark, crowded

boats glancing here and there athwart the burning ripples; the shores around all hung with myriad lamps; and the planet Venus, like a permanent rocket-star, looking down over the eaves of Triana on the perishable efforts of pyrotechny—altogether resulted in what is familiarly termed a striking scene.

My letter is getting into the "own correspondent" style; but I am tired with writing it all at one go-to, which is contrary to my custom, and my letter longer than usual. I shall write you word often on our journey to say we are safe, for I expect you to be very anxious and unhappy about robbers, and rivers, and precipices.

Yours till assassination, &c.

LETTER V.

Utrera, February 24.

THE world keeps whirling round, my Mabel, and remote contingencies come to pass almost by waiting for them! How distant and improbable it seemed two months ago that we should ever make this expedition, which I used to talk about with faithless enthusiasm like any other castle in the air. Then Harry actually came, and we set about our preparations. Even then how far off our start appeared! How impossible to get suitably mounted at a purchasable figure among the cheateries of Andalusian *chalanes*, whom it is impossible to persuade that one is "Yorkshire too!"

Here, as everywhere, the old impression pervades that Englishmen are (very loosely) made of money, and continually dropping to (gold) pieces. However, we got ourselves up in costume, and attended the beast fair in the Plaza de la Paja twice a week, and bargained and turned up our noses at the animals, and

simulated a patient confidence that we should meet with what we wanted at our own price in good time, and, in the end, got a couple of useful ponies for about eight pounds a-piece.

Then they had to be fitted with trappings, and we led them through the streets to a variety of saddlers' shops, where we tried on and bargained for the necessary articles of apparel. Then there was the packing—which to me is always two-thirds of a journey's fatigue—in this case aggravated by the harrowingly dubious separation, of things absolutely necessary on the road to go in the alforjas, from the chaos of a voluminously versatile portmanteau, containing almost all my worldly goods of any importance.

However, one after another, all things came about: and on Tuesday, February 24th, with our voluminous cloaks and plethoric alforjas over our shoulders, many pistols in our *fajas* (scarf-belts), and all got up in the thorough contrabandista style, we sallied forth from the *numero tres segundo* Calle de Velasquez, where I had lived during my sojourn of four months in Seville. We wended our way across the vast dismantled gap in the heart of the city, left by the destruction of the great convent of San Francisco,

and came to the stables. We had a slight altercation with the livery-man, a fat thief, who wished to charge us for more days than our ponies had been in pupilage.

It was about ten o'clock of a bright warm morning, when, aiming at the Puerta de Carmona, we hit that of La Carne, and therethrough sallied forth upon Spain at large. Having studiously avoided to study the maps and guide-books (which we nevertheless carried with us in case of need) we rode directly towards our favourite peak in the horizon, conversing, apropos of our late brush with the stableman, on the most effectual way of dealing with Spanish louts. In this controversy, H—— advocated the sharp and decisive sternness of an assumed superiority, and I a mild and persuasive gentleness; so it was agreed that, in our next difficulty, I was to shine first—and, if fair weather failed, then he should thunder afterwards.

Passing, in discussion, the dark-green golden-dotted orange-groves and spiry cypresses which encircle the city, we came to a little bridge with a great hole broken through its arch, and, strange to say, workmen mending it. Then, fording the Guadaira below the dam of a picturesque mill, we reached, after a mile

or two, the edge of the dehesa, or wilderness. Here we picketed our ponies — that is to say, we drove an iron spike into the ground; and to that spike there is a ring; and through that ring there is a cord—which cord, being tied at about seven yards' length round the pony's neck, allows him to graze with much more fresh air and liberty to sweeten his vegetable diet than ever the prisoner of Chillon had.

Not satisfied with this, however, my little black beast must needs break away, and, pulling up his spike, scamper back towards Seville, whose spires and towers still appeared in the distance. The other pony followed his example, and we ran after them.

I will leave the whole party running while I tell you why we stopped on the margin of the dehesa. If you had ever been a bad little boy run away from school, which I am exceedingly glad you never were, you would know that the first thing one does on emerging from one's immediate troubles, or the world at large, is to stop and think. We had broken loose from the trammels of society—disguised in a strange garb—with ponies to carry us wherever we chose; and were about to realise the romance of many dreams.

We had, besides, to load our pistols (for we were full of ideas of the dangers of the road), to arrange our saddles, and cloaks, and mantas, which, in the hurry of setting off, had been badly organised; we also intended to take a sketch of the last appearance of Seville. In Spain, the preface to everything is a cigarillo, a little squib of tobacco rolled in thin paper, which it takes a man of average talent six months to learn to make. We had just accomplished this delicate operation, and were about to light, when the ponies ran away and we after them.

We had not gone far, though far enough to see clearly that they could go much faster than we could follow, when the thought of our innocent and helpless alforjas left a prey to any ravening marauder who might cross the wilderness, brought us up short. H—— went back to guard the baggage, and I followed the ponies, expecting I should have to go back all the way to the livery-stable in the Calle del Viscaino.

At the picturesque mill I heard they had re-crossed the Guadaira at full gallop, and I trudged along beneath the sultry sun of February, in much despondence and perspiration, till I happened to think of the broken bridge, where the workmen

must have stopped them. So it turned out, for soon after, I was met by two of them leading the truants. They had got their saddles turned round, and each had trampled off one of his stirrups.

Having tried in vain riding the one to lead the other, I led them back, and, arriving hot and breathless within half a mile of our encampment, I was startled by the report of a pistol in that direction. Approaching cautiously, I could see nothing of H——, and the terrible idea flashed across my mind that robbers had found him alone guarding the baggage, and had shot him. Then it occurred to me, that when they found two alforjas, they would presume he had a companion, (who might institute a search unless also disposed of,) and were therefore perhaps lying in wait among the low brushwood to shoot me also, as soon as I should come within range.

I therefore approached by as open ground as possible, that they might not get too easy a shot at me; and, when I came as near as I thought safe, I shouted his name. After an anxious moment or two an answer was returned in well-known accents which relieved me from my apprehensions. Still the shot was to be accounted for.

Has your imagination prepared you for some-

thing dreadful? *Mine had—something like what follows.*

I approached the spot, and found H—— sitting among the cloaks and luggage, smoking, but I saw in an instant by the expression of his face, and the nervous twitch of his lips, which made the cigar end shake, that something serious had happened.

"I have been and done it, and there he lies, poor fellow: but it was his own fault."

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, as, turning where he pointed, I saw at about seven yards' distance the foot of a man sticking out of a plot of brushwood. "Good heavens! is he dead?—what is the meaning of all this?—what has happened?—and here is another saddle!—and what is that grey horse?"

"I will tell you, but in the meanwhile we had better pack our beasts and be off as quick as we can. I was sitting here about a quarter of an hour ago, when this man came riding across the dehesa, and, seeing me, turned this way. I had loaded my long pistols, and had one of them ready cocked in my hand, under a fold of the cloak I was lying on. After asking me a good many impudent questions, which I answered with as much patience as I could —he said at last,

"'Ah! I see you are a foreigner, probably on a long journey. *Es regular que tienes dinero* (it is to be supposed you have money). That is what I am come for, with your permission. I am Pedro Paredes, for that which your worship may please to command —a notable bandit, at whose name the civil guards tremble.' Saying this, he unslung his escopet from the hinder peak of his saddle, and dismounted to take a steadier shot in case of need.

"Instead of getting up, I pulled the saddle-bags and cloaks into a heap, and, lying on my stomach, presented the muzzle of my pistol over the battery. 'Now then, you impudent rascal,' I said, 'lay down your gun and go away, or I'll shoot you before you can coax your rusty old piece to go off. And I should advise you never again to try your hand on Englishmen with English pistols!'

"He hesitated and turned pale, and was stepping back, when I said, 'If you move without leaving your gun, I fire. Here, I have the advantage—at a distance, you might.'

"'No English dog shall make a jest of the Andaluz,' he said, a sudden fury flushing his face. He presented his gun as quickly as he could, and we both fired at the same moment, but my pistol had been on

his heart during the discussion, and through his heart it went—but I had a nearish escape—look at the rim of my hat."

Sure enough, there was a round hole in the broad upturned brim of the Calaniés.

"Thank God you are no worse, but what are we to do?"

"We had better leave him as he is; he has fallen with the gun clutched in his hand. If we don't disturb him, and they find him after a day or two, with money in his pocket, and all those silver buttons on his clothes, they will think he has destroyed himself; I have unsaddled his horse, and turned him loose. He will probably stray away, and not attract immediate attention; we must throw the saddle and bridle into another bush. There now—we had better put earth between us, as they say."

I could easily perceive that he was deeply shocked, though the excitement gave a sort of painful levity to his manner.

Before mounting, I went to look at the corpse, the first I had ever seen of one who had died a violent death. He had staggered backwards and fallen flat on his back, his arms and legs stretched out—one hand grasped the barrel of his escopet, and the other

a bunch of slender *palmita* stems, whose fan-like heads, rustling to the almost imperceptible breeze, seemed as if the dead hand stirred them. I bent aside a bush of rosemary which shadowed the face. One eyelid was propped up by a rosemary sprig, and the eye beneath still glared upwards with a glazed and stupified look of fierceness and terror. In bending the bush back to look into his face, I had stirred the sprig, and at first it seemed that he was alive. However, letting go the twigs in my horror, I saw how it was.

He was a fine, handsomish man, of about twenty-two or three, with marked and striking features, denoting, however, more strength of passion than intellect. The healthy sunburnt browns of his swarthy face were turned to ghastly yellows on the bloodless and ashy skin. The bright-coloured facings and glittering silver tags and brooches of his dress, too, added a painful contrast of holiday splendour to the faded hues of death.

We mounted and rode away, following a bridle-road which led us shortly into the olive farms, which are crossed in all directions by a great variety of sandy tracks. We kept our direction as well as we could, and met nobody, which we thought lucky.

At length we came to a road which looked larger and more important. This soon split into two at a picturesque, but apparently deserted hacienda, and as we could not see our peak in the undulating country in which we were, we tossed up with a broad ounce-piece of gold, whether we should take the right or left.

The left one won, which looked sinister, but we took it, and rode along till we came to a great road which must evidently be a *camino real.* On this we had not gone far before we came to a venta. Here we asked how far it was to Seville, and found it was only four leagues, Alcala de Guadaira being about half way on the great road.

We wanted to stop at the venta for the night, but they had no stables, so we got some bread and wine to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and hearing there was a town two leagues further on, we determined to press on, though it was near sunset, and we should have a good way to ride in the dark. The woman of the venta stared at us a good deal; so, taking pity on her curiosity, I asked her confidentially what she took us for, and gave her full liberty to guess as many times as she chose.

"It appears to me that your worships are without

doubt French caballeros, and it is regular that you travel with perfumery; but I never saw Frenchmen with so many pistols and poniards."

"We are no Frenchmen, señora, but English artists, at your service, and pistols and knives are to an Englishman indispensable necessaries of life."

"There are not so many of the 'mala gente' about now since the Guardia Civil are so many on the road. Vamos! do you not take the rest of your loaf with you?"

"It is much at your disposal—remain with God, señora."

"The English are of a truth very rich and noble—may your worships go with God, caballeros."

As we rode on the sun soon went down, and as there is hardly any twilight, the dusk deepened rapidly. We were joined by a man on an ass who entered into conversation.

"By your speech, caballeros, I should say you were not of these parts; are you not afraid to travel on these roads after dark? There is a formidable band which greatly infests the neighbourhood of Utrera. They robbed a traveller last week of three hundred dollars."

"We are Englishmen, and therefore afraid of

nothing. We carry pistols enough to shoot ten men, and if there were a dozen, it is probable the two others would run away. We are on our way to Gibraltar, and if anything were to happen to us, the Governor, who of course expects us, would immediately shoot a bomb-shell over La Mancha into the Cortes at Madrid, which would blow up all the Spains in one ruin."

"Ha! ha! you talk roundly; but we know the English are a dangerous people, and it is asserted that they season their ollas with gunpowder instead of salt."

Here we heard voices behind, and a sound of horses' hoofs. Our companion hailed them with some cry which we did not understand, and as our imaginations were prepared for robbers, we took it for a signal, and concluded that the man on the donkey was an accomplice sent on to reconnoitre. We therefore had our pistols ready. Two men on a white horse, emerging from the darkness, overtook us, and shortly afterwards another horse, also with two men on it, came up. We congratulated one another on this arrangement, for two bodies close together would of course be much easier than one to hit in the dark. However, the men saluted us

civilly, and fell into conversation with our companion. They were coming back from a fair at Alcala de Guadaira, and were slightly elevated. H—— and I were talking to one another in English about the probabilities of their being thieves; and it is a sort of axiom with the lower classes here, who are not much used to foreigners, that people, who talk to one another in a language which *they* do not understand, will not understand what they say to each other in plain Spanish.

"What is come of Pedro that he does not return with you?" said the man on the ass.

"Quien sabe! probably he dances the fandango."

"According to my view," said one of the men on the second horse, "he is engaged in another affair. I saw him watching a horse-dealer as he put up the price of a very pretty chestnut mare—sixty-three dollars, and not dear either: I think Master Perrico has an eye to the gentleman's purse."

"Hush! these strangers may overhear you."

"By no means, you hear their tongue is not the same as ours. Gentlemen," he continued, addressing us, "is it long that you travel in Spain?"

"Three months, and my companion three weeks."

"Indeed, so little, and already you speak a few

words of the Castillian. What may be the business on which your worships travel?"

"We are portrait-painters very much at your service," replied H——.

"At what price do you work?" said a man on the white horse which was a little a-head.

"From three reals to six, according to the size, and if the work of art does not give satisfaction to the sitter, he can leave it and pay nothing."

"Carajo! that is an exceedingly honourable way of dealing: and if these gentlemen do not leave Utrera very early to-morrow, I will have my picture and give it to my wife, carajo!"

"We are entirely at the disposition of your worship, for that which your worship may please to command."

In such discourse we began to see distant twinkling lights and to hear the chiming bells (las animas) which were ringing for the departed souls of Utrera, for that was the place on which we had stumbled in the dark on our south-east passage. As we rode up the long straggling street, the white horse stopped before a house, out of which came two women. One embraced her husband as he dismounted: the other—who seemed young and beautiful, as far as the dim

light of the street (which only came from a few straggling windows and stars) allowed us to judge, after glancing anxiously about among the horsemen —exclaimed,

"Where is my Pedro? Why have you not brought him back to me?"

"Do you expect me to carry your pet hawk on my wrist, pretty Rosita?"

"I don't know what can be the matter with Rosa," said the elder woman, "she has been moping and fretting about her Perrico all day."

Here we said good night, and rode on, still hearing indistinctly through the thickening veil of darkness the maiden's eager tones of inquiry after her lover. It was evident she had felt some mournful presentiment of his fate, which we but too probably connected with our adventure of the dehesa. We went, as we had been recommended, to the Posada de la Spada (Sword Inn), were received as distinguished guests, supped on a clean table-cloth, and were recognised by the ostler in the stable, when we went to see our ponies fed, as having passed a year ago. This we did not deny, but applauded his memory.

Since then I have been writing with all the voluminousness of a new-fangled tourist. H—— has

been asleep some hours, but the long extinguished cigar he went to sleep with in his mouth still points from the doubled-down margin of bed-clothes over his breast, towards the parted lips. It is time for me to go to bed too, and finish this extravagantly long letter, so good night, my Mab, and farewell !

LETTER VI.

Moron, February 27.

My Mab will easily imagine we did not wake very early next morning. I had sat up till very late writing after a hard day's work. We both awoke suddenly, and found a couple of carabineros standing at the foot of our beds. We started up, thinking ourselves arrested, but it appeared they had only come to inspect our passports, which were shown and found satisfactory. H—— handed a paper of cigarillos to them from under his pillow, and they began to smoke.

There was another tap at the door, and in walked a tall, long-nosed, bushy-whiskered man, with sharp eyes, glancing rather furtively from beneath dark, shaggy eyebrows. We soon recognised him by his voice to be the master of the grey horse who had bespoken a portrait over night. He begged, with a profusion of politeness, to have the pleasure of receiving us at his house, which was entirely

at our disposition, where we might proceed to business. He seemed slightly uneasy in the presence of the soldiers, and as soon as we told him that we should wait upon him after breakfast, he decamped, with a sort of half slink, half swagger. When he was gone, one of the soldiers said,

"May I be pardoned for my curiosity in inquiring what business your worship may have to transact with that man?"

"Simply to take his portrait in water-colours," replied H——. "You see by our passports we are travelling artists,—we met casually on the road last night. Is there anything against him?"

"Why, not exactly against him, for there is nothing proved; but he is shrewdly suspected of having a hand in two or three murders, and a dozen robberies or so. But he is sly,—indeed, he may be said to know some few points more than the devil,—and we have never yet been able to lay our hands upon him."

With this the carabineros made their bows and departed. Over our breakfast we compared notes on our dreams. H—— had been taken up before the alcalde, and received sentence of death. I had dreamed that H—— was shot, and that I sat

by his body watching the blood come bubbling out of a round wound in his breast so fast, that the whole dehesa was flooded, and turned to a great sea of blood; and then the body turned into an island, and I was the corpse lying upon it. Though I was dead, and in a very ghastly state, lying stark and stiff, I could see perfectly well that a shallop, with a gleaming sail, came towards me over the vermilion sea, and I lay still, knowing that my Mabel was in that shallop. It neared and touched the rocks—she recognised the corpse, shrieked, and fell into the sea. I, entirely irrespective of my social position as an inanimate body, started up, and dived to the rescue, in which inappropriate act I awoke.

We went after breakfast to our respectable friend's dwelling. H—— drew him, and I persuaded the mournful Rosita to let me take her. She was more beautiful than we had any idea of in the dark, the night before. Large, deep, black, flashing eyes, and the richest mass of glossy, raven tresses. The fault of her face was in the size of her nostrils, and a somewhat fierce expression, which from time to time flickered about the corners of her mouth.

She was sad now, mostly, for she was afraid something had happened; but now and then the thought would cross her of her Pedro's having gone to visit a certain Conchita, whom she usually mentioned by the uncomplimentary nick-name "La Zorra" (the she-fox). She talked, in a rambling sort of way, every thing that came in her head all the time I was drawing her, and answered all the questions I put with perfect freedom. It appeared that she had had a most severe quarrel with Pedro the night before he had gone to Alcalà, and after it had dreamed he was dead.

While I was colouring the portrait, there arose a sound of voices outside, and drew nearer. The women were out in a moment, and we followed. Four of the Guardia Civil, with a horse, were surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and children. All were eagerly pressing round and peeping under the gay Valencian manta which covered the horse's burden. We were just in time to see Rosita dash frantically through the crowd, and tear off the manta.

She shrieked with a more terrible cry than I heard in my own bloody dream, and fell among the horses' feet. The body of her lover was slung

across the saddle, with its head and feet dangling on either side. They had found, and recognised the body, and corded it over the horse's back; but the stiff arms and legs stuck out awkwardly; and indeed it was a very horrid sight.

But you have had enough horrors nearly to make you ill, my tender-hearted Mabel, so I will describe no more. In the hurry and dismay of our host's establishment, we disappeared unobserved, and as we had not been paid, we thought it no robbery to carry away our drawings. Mine I send you. It gives but a poor idea of her, but she never sat still a moment.

We set off shortly for Arahal, and rode by an old convent, through olive groves, until we came to a bare, arid, undulating plain. The road skirted the mountain range at about three leagues distance. We rode along, conversing on the strange romance in which we had so unforeseenly become implicated, and congratulating ourselves that we had got so well out of it.

Getting tired of the monotony of the road, and the uncomfort of our rude, straw-stuffed pads, we dismounted, hoppled our ponies' fore-legs with

the *trabas* (a soft woollen bandage in the manner of a cow-tie), and sat down to smoke by the way-side. During this operation H——'s pony tried to roll and broke his traba, whereupon H—— calmly observed, that this escape would probably form the adventure of the day. To this I agreed; but suggested, that as our troubles and trials would probably come soon enough, we had better finish our pipes in peace, before we made any overt demonstration of catching the little beast. This apathetic conduct turned out well; for the pony soon entangled his legs in the trailing bridle-reins, and was pounced upon by his master. We continued our course, and shortly saw Arahal, an unremarkable white town, on a slight eminence. H—— asked me how far I thought it was, and I guessed it about three or four miles.

"It is further than that. Do you see that turnip-field on the knoll, which is, if anything, nearer to us than the town?"

"Yes—very plain."

"Well, that turnip-field is an olive-garden, and the turnips are great olive-trees."

We now had passed the shoulder of the mountain spur, and behind it we saw a town, to which we

resolved to direct our steps as soon as a road branched off to the right, which we surmised could not be long; but there was nothing of the kind till our arrival at Arahal. As we rode up the hill into the town the sunset was gilding the ruined arches of the broken-down, but not ancient, church, and doing its best to make this unpicturesque place as pretty as possible; and it succeeded very well, for, after all, everything depends on the light you see it in. The broad valley between us and the mountain range was all filled with golden splendour, which burst in upon us through gaps in the straggling street.

We got to the posada, and ordered supper. While it was cooking we studied the guide-book. Here we discovered that the town we had seen at the foot of the mountains was Moron, a celebrated den of thieves; and that the next town on the way to Ronda was still worse, no other than the notorious Olvera mentioned in the proverb—"*Mata al hombre y ve te a Olvera*" (kill your man and get you to Olvera); being the most safe and congenial refuge for the desperately wicked, which Spain could afford. However, we congratulated ourselves that if we had less safety we should have all the more adventures.

At supper, being very hungry, we ate ravenously of fried pork: which, for want of a sufficient peptic pause before going to bed, gave me an indigestion, and made me quite unable to eat any breakfast next morning. I, however, foreseeing that I might be hungry further on in the day, sallied forth and bought a small loaf, a few oranges, and a bit of Dutch cheese, as a provision for the way.

We were, to the best of our judgment, overcharged by the host of the posada: and when we made our indignant protest, he appealed to a most sinister-looking personage with one eye, whom we at once had picked out of the assembly round the chimney-corner, as the captain of a band of robbers. This impartial umpire at once took the side of the *Señor huesped*, and I thought H—— and he would have come to blows. In the end we, of course, had to pay.

As we were departing, the bandit captain inquired if the buttons (with which we were profusely ornamented) were silver, and this settled our conviction that we should be waylaid this day, if any. Everything seemed unlucky. I felt sick and ill; and, as I was leading my pony, which kicked and reared, and was very unruly, out of the market-place, my alforjas

rolled off his back. A man, who came forward civilly to help it on again, remarked to the crowd how heavy it was; and as they always conclude that Englishmen are laden only with the precious metals, this would, of course, afford an additional incentive to the marauders of the district. We, however, had all our pistols ostentatiously displayed in our fajas, and tried to look as fierce as we could, in hopes they might think us dangerous.

We descended the hill and mounted. So full were we of the idea of robbers, that we seriously suspected a poor man, with a donkey laden with pipkins, whom we overtook on the road, of being in some way or other implicated in the conspiracy against our lives and property. The road across the valley was not very clear at best, and in crossing a puddly stream we missed it.

After wandering about some time we came in sight of a miserable hut; hard by there was a miserable little garden, and in the garden a miserable little man hoeing languidly. To him we shouted, but got no reply; as I felt sure he must have heard us, I rode up in great wrath, and began to upbraid him for not attending when he was spoken to.

Thereupon he left his cabbages and came up, looking very timid, half-witted, and sickly. We inquired our way to Moron, and he offered to put us in it. I, seeing he was about to make a job of showing us the way, began to speak sharply to him; but H—— said he was evidently a poor wretch on whom some coppers would not be thrown away, and we had better let him show us. The man, seeing he had an advocate in the enemy's ranks, immediately began to beg, and to state a very piteous case, of which ague and want of money were the principal ingredients.

H—— had provided himself in England with lots of drugs to physic the barbarians, and here was a case. He immediately jumped off, pulled his medicine-stocking out of the alforjas, and began studying his receipt-book of cottage-physic and cookery. Making a desk of his saddle, he stood turning over the leaves. "How to make suet dumplings!" that wouldn't do. "A good receipt for brewing beer at threepence a gallon," &c., but nothing was said about the proper way of treating tertian ague. Hereupon I was called into consultation, and I suggested that, "an he had never tasted blue-pill before, it should go near to remove

his fit."* So H—— discharged a raking fire of blue pills upon his patient.

"But," said the poor man, "I cannot buy your remedies, for I have nothing," and he seemed greatly distressed by the idea of losing these wonderful little bullets, on whose sovereign merits we had been lecturing him.

"Never mind that," said H——, "we require no money from those who have none; but it is the custom of English professional men to cure everybody who is sick."

"God will repay your worship, most benevolent of medicos," said the invalid, with a meek and lowly reverence.

I added two-pence in copper, to give the prescription a flavour of sincerity; for I thought that, perhaps, upon reflection, he might be afraid to take the pills from unknown hands, for fear they might prove poison. The huge blue-pill-box was replaced in the stocking, and we proceeded by the instructions of our patient. It was about two o'clock, and I was beginning to feel hungry and weak, having been inwardly deranged all the morning.

About half way to Moron we got off and sat in a

* The Tempest.

ditch by the wayside under the huge green teeth of the aloe. Here I ate some of my loaf and cheese, but did not eat the oranges, for reasons which I will not explain. "On the contrary, I seasoned the simple aqueous contents of my bottle with fifteen drops of laudanum, which, with the concurrence of the "most benevolent of medicos," I ventured to prescribe for myself.

While I ate, and H—— smoked, my pony observed a great herd of horses feeding in the dehesa at about a quarter of a mile off.' He got his feet out of the traba and galloped away. H—— had bought a new one at Arahal to supply the place of that broken the day before, so that the Cid had to follow the Moor with his feet tied, for the new hopple resisted all his efforts. He, however, managed to go a surprising pace, much quicker than H—— could run after him. I, being an invalid, lay still to await the result, and of course expected to be attacked in H——'s absence on the model of our former day's sad experience. By the way, I don't think I have told you that we christened H——'s pony the Cid, and that we intend to christen or rather paganise mine when we discover the name of the Cid's principal antagonist, for which we are

not sufficiently extemporaneous historians. In abeyance, mine is provisionally invested with the general title of "the Moor"—sometimes Othello for short.

After a while H—— returned with the ponies. He had been helped to catch them by two horse-herds, who were tending the flock of horses. The Moor had been received with kicks and bites and all sorts of indignities by the society with whom he had amiably desired to be better acquainted. The Cid, who was an older hoof, had not galloped so confidently into the fray. We proceeded and were within about a league of the broad-topped citadel of Moron, when the Moor became unruly and troublesome, and in the little misunderstanding which ensued, my saddle slipped round and rolled me off. The bridle, which I still held in my hand, also slipped off, as tugging hard with outstretched nose he got his ears squeezed through and galloped away.

H——, who had just had a good deal of trouble with the ponies, and who had a just right to complain of my management in letting the little beast get away (for I had lost my temper over the Moor's troublesome caperings, and laid about his head and ears with my switch), did not say anything about

what I ought or ought not to have done, but with great patience and good humour galloped back on the Cid after the runaway.

I carried his alforjas and mine to a little gully in the dehesa, whence, through the rustling reeds and palmitas, I could see the ramparts of Moron. I wrote up my journal; and grubbed up what I supposed to be a palmita-root with my *navaja* (clasp-knife).

When I had eaten it, I found by the top that it was a sort of lily, which might be rank poison for anything I knew; for in my anxiety to get at the root of the mischief, I had neglected to examine the leaves which bore only so slight and general a resemblance to those of the palmita, that I wondered how I could have been so stupid. I then did a little sketch of Moron as it appeared through the reeds, which carried me on without impatience to H——'s return with the ponies.

We rode up into the town, which is quaint, antique, and compact, and got to the Posada de los Caballeros, a very good sample of a queer old massive posada. The stables were a dark, low, heavy-vaulted, round-arched sort of cloister-crypt. After seeing to our horses we ordered dinner, and

sat waiting for it in a sort of deep gallery (something like the Rows of Chester), which ran along one side of the crooked little court-yard.

To wear away the time we got out our sketch-books and tried to get the crooked angles, and nooks, and crannies of the tenement into perspective. Apropos of the sketch-books, I delivered from the gallery a neat little address to the court-yard, informing all whom it might concern that we were celebrated artists from London, come to take the portraits of the beauty and valour of Moron, at from three to six reals, and that any one who wished to have a portrait must give notice over-night: otherwise we should depart early, and Moron would probably never again enjoy a similar opportunity!

We dined on eggs and salad, and bread fried in oil: then went out and turned up the main street, which rises with a gentle slope to the foot of the castle-hill. At the end of the street and below the castle is a nice-looking church, whose tower reminded us mildly of the Giralda. Thence the ascent of the huge mound is very steep climbing. The castle is a vast ruin, the remains of a Moorish one patched up by the French, who occupied Moron three years.

The sun had disappeared before we got to the top,

and the faint glow of the western sky was fading rapidly away on the spires and towers of the town below us. We wandered round the lofty ramparts which commanded on one side the deep blue mass of mountains, and on the other, the vast expanse of undulating, variegated plains, darkening away to where the Sierra Morena mingled with the sky.

Venus came forth like a brilliant afterthought of sunshine, and all the jewelled company of heaven appeared in the order of their magnitudes and dignities at the levee of their radiant queen. The dim lamp-light, too, began to flicker through the windows of the town below, and the night-winds sighed coldly from the snowy mountain-range. Oh! my Mabel, is it necessary to tell you whither away flew my thoughts beneath the northern constellations of the night? or whose fair effigy they bore me back on their swift wings, to pace with me Moron's tall battlement, sheltered beneath the broad wing of my capa; to say a thousand pretty things, and sing pretty little snatches to the night-winds, and the stars as they

> "Pierced the fading veil of light,
> Coming out in clusters bright,
> Making beautiful the night, &c."

But if I were to relate the things I imagine, I should have to leave out the things we do and see, and this plain, unvarnished record of our adventures, such as they are, would become little better than the flimsy and fictitious tissue of a tourist's tale. I am getting sleepy and must go to bed, that is, I must lie down as I am, wrapped in my cloak, on a complicated substitute which I have laid together on the floor. The saddle turned upside down and eked out with a folded plaid forms the bed, and my alforjas the pillow.—Good night.

P.S. In spite of the unpromising preparations I described last night, I slept well till near day-break. Then, feeling rather cold, I got up and shook myself, and went down-stairs, where I found a crowd of muleteers lying about in the court on their mantas. I got the great archway-door open and went up to the castle to see the sun rise.

The morning was cold as I sat at the top of the great tower, while Phosphor faded in the flushing east; and the mountains, peak after peak, were touched with amethyst lights, while the baby day crept along the plain. And at last the sun arose from behind the mountain-range, and cast the tall shadow of Moron across the land, almost to the

horizon; but as the chorus of all the cocks grew louder the shadow shortened.

So I went down and gave a feed of barley to the ponies, and ordered chocolate, and wrote this postscript. H—— is getting up. He has been terribly bitten by fleas. He had a mattress which, in consideration of my being an invalid, he wanted me to sleep on, but I liked my own inventions better, for it was a very suspicious looking article. H—— is so disgusted with the fleas that he will not stop here to paint a customer who called last night to order a portrait. The chocolate is ready,—farewell.

LETTER VII.

Ronda, March 1.

FAIRLY in among the mountains, Mabel mine! In among the toppling crags that lean with rugged elbows on the brink of rushing mountain-streams; and glass their overhanging brows in dark, clear pools; and dip long-trailing branches down to catch the floating flakes of froth that slowly sail on oily-dimpling eddies round and round.

In among the tall, majestic giantesses of the prime, who awfully look down through leagues of filmy distance on the green winding valleys and ravines of the fairy-land they guard. To woo them, clouds, those vague and mournful bridegroom-ghosts, exiled from their native ocean-plains, come trooping sullenly before the shrill host of Æolus, and here find refuge.

Here they throw their long pale arms around the stately maidens of the Sierra, on whose broad bosoms pillowed they weep themselves away. They

perish, but leave a noble race of rivers that, in the pride of youth and led by an inborn instinct, leap joyously down to the sea. There they enlist among the turbulent billows that clap their hands with a shout, and wrestle with the blasts, till, slain by a treacherous smile of sunshine, the thin and vaporous ghosts are dispersed and driven away to revive, Anteus-like, by the touch of their mother earth.

I read this little poetical fragment to H——, thinking it (in confidence) rather fine. And he heartlessly says that my rhapsodies on the Sierras are old saws. You know *Sierra* is Spanish for saw (as well as mountain), "which, it serves him right," for his unfeeling joke, to have it explained before his face.

In order to mislead any of the blood-hounds who might be upon our track, leaving Moron, we inquired for Saucejo, and set off by the map and the sun's guidance for Olvera, which lies in the contrary direction. We left the Rosa Spur to the right, and plunged into the heart of the hills. After winding in and out and up and down rugged, and, in places, almost impassable roads, which in the metaphoric idiom of the country are called *caminos de perdices*,*

* Partridge roads.

freely translated "paths to perdition," we found ourselves in a wild, solitary, picturesque valley, where it was often difficult to distinguish the way from the bed of the rivulet by which it ran.

As we were threading our way with cautious steps, among the boulder stones, we saw a cloaked horseman overtaking us. As he came near we saw he had an escopet slung behind his saddle. We immediately settled that he was the Roderick Dhu of a numerous band, and expected him as he approached to blow his bugle and raise a crop of bristling muskets from the thick brushwood which surrounded us.

He turned out, on nearer inspection, to be an amiable young squire who was riding to overlook a farm of his father's, called "La Gallina," after which this beautiful valley was named. I gave him a cigar and his heart opened. He praised our ponies, and pressed us to bait our horses and *descansar* (untire) ourselves at his farm. I got him to tell me the names of the various beautiful and fragrant shrubs which clothed the vale and scented the gale; so that in the voluminous volumes we shall be able to speak familiarly of a whole family of barbarous Arabic botanical names, such as *retama, lantico, lechera, tomillo, aelfa,* &c., which I took down in my

pocket-book, with notes for subsequent descriptive scenery.

Our friend turned off to his farm, where the valley widened and a grassy knoll was dotted with park-like trees, a striking contrast with the wilderness surrounding it. We dived down a ravine which seemed most in our direction, but the path soon became so narrow and rugged that we once or twice thought of turning back. A great red-legged partridge ran cackling up one of the steep banks, and H——, who is a good shot with his long pistols pulled one out, but the bird was in the bushes before he could fire.

We came, after much rough winding work, upon the venta of Zaframogon, a picturesque venta in a charming valley. Here we baited our ponies, and sallying out with our sketch-books, set about selecting a point of view with all the formality of consummate artists. We drew, and dabbled, and daubed at random, for we neither of us knew what colours to use. We had intended, with true Pre-Raffaellite ignorant audacity, to stick to nature and paint what we saw, but all our efforts only served to show us that we couldn't. Our principal stumbling-block was a beautiful mountain with precipices and

jags of grey rock delicately tinted with various vegetation, and overdrawn with a fine transparent veil of air. At last I mixed a great pool of lamp-black and indigo, with which I washed the whole landscape, except a little round spot on the sky, by which process it became a very respectable moonlight piece.

We rode on along the valley, which had now a better road. Indeed we had missed the best road in the morning, and had been struggling through inconvenient but very beautiful by-paths all day. Crossing a green valley, we saw a little boy and a bull-calf playing at matador and toro to an audience of five cows and a cow-keeper. The boy had a stick to represent a sword, and as the calf bobbed at him he stepped aside and poked the stick at his shoulder. The cowherd seemed much interested, and alternately cried, "bravo spada," and "bravo toro," as the sword or bull got the best of it. Oh, seeds of bloodshed sown in infancy!

We topped a high level of mountain road and saw Olvera, a pyramidal group of spires and towers crowned with a pointed castle-rock. It seemed much nearer than it was, for about half a league brought us to an unforeseen deep broad valley,

whose sides had to be gone down and up before we could get to our resting-place.

The flood of sunset was beginning to break in billows of fire over the ragged sky-line, and the sun's beamy skirmishers were knit, in a last struggle ere their lord's retreat, with giant mountain-shadows, as we dipped into the great gap and left Phœbus leaning on the shoulder of a peak.

As we crossed the valley, the road became more and more crowded with peasants and donkeys returning from the field; and as we reached the foot of the long, steep ascent into Olvera, there must have been a hundred and fifty men, women, and children, to climb the hill with us. The road ran straight up the mountain's flank, from which the stony ribs protruded. Higher and higher, the stony excrescences grew larger and larger; first as big as waggons, then as haystacks, then as houses, and then as churches.

At the top of a mile of steep climbing, the straight road became a corkscrew-staircase-street, winding in and out among the huge protruding hulks of rock, patched here and there with buildings, which seemed in comparison as small and frail as cobwebs in a quarry. After another half mile

of this corkscrew street, still steeper than the road, we came to the market-place, from whence we saw the castled craig still towering high above us. However, we were luckily at the end of our day's journey, for here we entered the Posada de la Plaza.

It was chock full and in a great bustle. The stable, moreover, was, if possible, still chocker full, and indeed two mares had to be turned out somewhere else to make way for our ponies. My little beast, who is an *entero*, (that is, an untamable little demon, who on all occasions wishes to prance, and snort, and fight with his compeers,) made a tremendous uproar on going into the stable; and in passing them no doubt very much shocked the nerves of the unprotected mares who were so ungallantly turned out for his accommo dation.

I gave him his barley, but instead of eating it he kept pawing and whinnying, over the sore backs of some peaceable decrepit old mules, at another entero, who snorted back contemptuous defiance in return. I left him to go and provide our own supper; and after my manner when I am hungry and cross, began to order everybody about in a great hurry, speaking with much authority.

The landlady seemed impressed with the necessity

of making an effort towards getting our supper ready, but the landlady's son, who acted also in the capacity of *Mozo de la Cuadra* (ostler), set up his bristles and said, "Who is this man in the garments of an *arriero* who gives himself the airs of a *gran duque*, that the suppers of all our guests should be postponed for the convenience of his belly?"

"I am an English gentleman and hungry—therefore, though the sun and moon and all the planets were brought to a stand, I must have my supper, and that presently."

"An English gentleman! that alters the case greatly. I judged by his lordship's accent in speaking the Castillian (which, by the way, his lordship speaks '*perfectamente*'), that his lordship was an Italian. His lordship will be glad to hear that there are two of his countrymen arrived here this evening: another lord of Gibraltar similar to his lordship, attended by a very pretty young gentleman, who shall perchance be brother to his excellency. They have a supper in preparation, 'muy rico,' partridges and rabbits, with a dish of eggs and bacon; there will be well enough for all four, and it will be a pleasure to your lordship to sup with your countrymen."

He did not wait to hear what I had begun to grumble about my having seen a considerable number of English in my time, and indeed the mention of partridges and rabbits almost balanced that natural antipathy which an Englishman usually feels to encountering another Englishman anywhere, but especially abroad.

My eye naturally followed the now obsequious mozo as he elbowed through the crowd toward a dark recess in the chimney-corner. I felt sure there would be some awkwardness from the exceedingly vicious principle on which our self-constituted ambassador was about to act—viz., that Englishmen meeting with one another in a far country, must be glad to see one another and eat at the same table. Therefore, feeling it was better to be impudently than bashfully intrusive, I followed up my *corps diplomatique*, and emboldened also by hunger, approached the awful strangers.

The mozo had stopped on the great hearth to rake up some embers which smouldered dimly round a huge rooty log something of the size and shape of a sheep (and, indeed, with the heterogeneous company of sticks around it, it reminded me of Isaac and the ram caught in the thicket), and was giving,

in a sort of casual manner, an account of our arrival. Meanwhile, the twigs, which did not understand being raked at for nothing, took fire, and by the blaze I saw the little group in the corner.

A tall, lathy, good-looking man of five-and-twenty, dressed in the dark *zamarra* (lamb's-wool jacket) and black-leathered riding trousers, black silk faja, and a jaunty calaniés of the last fashion, sat smoking the cigarillo of patience, and watching a stout earthen jar among the embers before him. His companion, who fully came up to the mozo's description, as "a very pretty young gentleman," seemed about fifteen.

He was apparently wearied with the day's journey, and leaned with his glossy auburn curls spread on the shoulder of the other, who held him tenderly with an arm round his waist, and now and then blew away the smoke, and peeped down into the innocent, sleepy face. He seemed to take very little notice of the garrulous relation of the mozo. However, at length he cast his eyes across the blaze, and our glances met.

"Adios, Señor A——; m'alegro muchissimo de ver a Vmd.," said I, for I saw it was no other than A——, who was a great friend of mine at Cambridge, though I have seen very little of him since.

"Adios, Señor," he replied in Spanish; "tambien m'alegro yo, pero francamente no m'acuerdo de Vmd.: tampoco sabré como Vmd. conoce mi apellido."

"Tuve el gusto de pasar dos o tres años de mi vida con Vmd. en la universidad de Cantabrigia y me llamo Jorge Juan Cayley."

At this he started and laughed so loud that the sleepy boy started up and we shook hands over the fire. At this moment H—— came up, too, who was also a great friend of his. Amid the general ebullition of cordiality, the mozo, who had almost despaired of establishing any sort of relations, but now concluded that his representations had suddenly taken effect, conceived it a fit time to effect a coalition of suppers. His suggestions were at once agreed to, and in the meantime A—— introduced to us his younger brother, Juanito, who blushed and shook hands—very soft hands, more like a lady's than a boy's. But I was busy asking A—— fifty questions, and took no notice of that or the blush, and went on.

"Why, I thought you were to have been married to the lovely Lady Jane before this. I heard it was to be in November for certain."

"So I was; but she had the scarlet-fever, poor child."

"And so you left her to recover at her leisure while you travel about to amuse yourself!"

"Not exactly,—but they are dishing up the olla, so let us to supper!"

We supped in a spacious apartment up-stairs, whose walls were hung with frying-pans and grid-irons, and other utensils of cookery. On inquiry, we were informed by the handmaid, that in the summer families come here from Ronda; for it appears, that when the inhabitants of the sultry plains are baked out of their cities, and come to Ronda for fresh mountain-breezes, the inhabitants of Ronda retreat to a still loftier level, and this is then used as their kitchen.

It came out, in the course of the meal, as the superior perspicacity of my Mabel may have anticipated, that Master Juanito (who had got into a great perplexity under cross-examination about Eton, whence he was said lately to have emerged, but of which seat of learning he seemed to have preserved very limited and equivocal recollections), turned out to be no young gentleman at all, and, by way of explanation, was, to his great confusion, introduced to us as Lady Jane A——.

"The fact is," said A——, "Johnny, like most

other new-married young ladies, had a strong desire to travel, and do something strictly romantic. I, who had observed, in the course of my European experience, the misery and bother of trailing about a cumbersome train of serving-men and women, immediately laid it down as an irrefragable axiom that nothing romantic could possibly be done with a courier and lady's-maid.

"I thought this would be final, and that we should have gone down home and improved the place, which has been a good deal neglected during my long minority. I laid out a very pretty little programme, in which I was to figure as the gay backwoodsman, and Johnny was to come, stealing like a sunbeam in among the crowded boles, to surprise me with a nice little napkin-basket of sandwiches and grapes; and sit on mossy mounds, singing 'Woodman, spare that tree,' while I thinned the timber; which, I am sorry to say, is sadly choked up.

"But Johnny (who is getting a little wiser now from sad experience, poor young man!) at that time infinitely preferred romance to reality. She observed, with some show of plausibility, that she could do without her maid very well (now that her bonny brown hair had been cut short in that cruel scarlet

fever, which brought her within a hair's length of her life, and was a distressing case, very); that is, if I could fasten her dress. Now, if there is a strong point in my character, it is an inherent aptitude for fastening hooks and eyes, especially in a small cabin, where there is no room for one's elbows, and in a rough sea. I, therefore, had my little shrimp of a yacht got ready, and we prepared to do something romantic, upon the corsair model, in the Mediterranean."

"But where have you left the yacht?"

"Why, if it had been possible, I ought to have landed my Princess Dorothea-Micomicoma at Osuna; but as Osuna is among the inland mountains it could not be accomplished. After we had seen Lisbon and Cadiz and Gibraltar, we put in, in stress of weather, into the deep-sheltered rock-basin of Carthagena. Here we went ashore, and Johnny was so struck with the gay costumes, which are certainly more picturesque there than anywhere else, that she must needs get fitted out, as you see, in all the colours of the rainbow; and a nice, respectable dress it is for an amiable, interesting young gentleman, of sober taste and discretion. Well! after a masquerade or so in the little cabin, with myself and the

cracked looking-glass for audience, she was so much delighted with herself, that she thought it a pity not to exhibit herself to all the Spains: so I was forced to buy a couple of mules, and we have been on the tramp ever since."

So far from taking the part of this cruel and perverse husband, we very much applauded what Lady Jane had done, and inquired if the expedition had proved satisfactory. She said it was charming, and she was quite ready to ride all over the world. They had ridden by Murcia, Lorca, and Guadix to Granada.

"The principal romance of the journey was at Baza, where the posadero's pretty daughter made most serious love to master Johnny, so that the young lady's *novio* was terribly jealous, and I thought there would have been bloodshed; for, though you would hardly imagine it of the young man, now he is so mild and modest after being found out, he then, when his imposture was unsuspected, played the successful lover with a most theatrical and coxcombical swagger; pointing also his discourse with many appropriate expletives, of whose meaning he is wholly unaware, but which he has learnt on the road to introduce with great effect into the genteel, school-room

Spanish which he brought out with him. From Granada we are on our way to Seville. To-day we left Ronda. You are now in possession of our history, and we have a fair right to *your* adventures."

When we had lit our cigars, and Lady Jane had condescended to accept a very thin little cigarillo which H—— made up for her, I proceeded to narrate our adventure of the dehesa, and was in the most palpitating part of it, when the mozo came up in a flurry from the stable, and said that my pony had broken his halter, and was fighting furiously. I left H—— to finish off the story, and went down in among a great crowd of horses and mules and asses. My little demonio had broken away, and gone to his principal enemy, a large black entero, who was luckily tied up rather tighter, or else he would probably have killed the little ninny before I got there. The traba was fortunately fast on the latter's forelegs. There they were, snorting, and whinnying, and biting, and trying to strike one another with their forefeet.

The Moor at last got his manacled hands into a high manger to which his enemy's head was tied, and had some difficulty in getting them out again. At this conjuncture I rushed in among the fray, and

getting hold of the remains of the broken halter round his neck, pulled him down, and drew him struggling and kicking and rearing with great vehemence, back to his own barley, and tied him up very tight between a pacific mule and the Cid.

Soon after I went up-stairs again the party broke up. A broad mattress was laid where the table had been; we rolled ourselves in our cloaks, turning the *esclavina*, or cape, over our heads; then standing at the foot of the mattress, we fell back like tragic heroes, so as not to unswaddle our feet in lying down. We were considerably eaten by fleas. H—— next morning counted forty-two separate bites on one knee,—in fact, he said he had been flead alive.

Accordingly, we got up at sunrise, and while our chocolate was being made ready, investigated the little level ground at the top of the rock-city, where there is a large building that contains a church, a town-hall, and a school, apparently once a convent. It forms the massive mural crown of the pyramid. We ascended the castle still higher up, and had a fine view of mountain-tops. On our return breakfast was ready, and the A——s stirring. We breakfasted together, and after breakfast sketched the castle apex, which, from the other side of the plaza,

appeared high above the posada's roof. Here fifty or sixty inhabitants gathered to observe the performance. Lady Jane made a very nice drawing, and we a couple of very nasty ones. The spectators exclaimed with wonder and delight, when *el joben* put in what they called his *golpes de maestro* (master strokes), and kept telling one another, "There is Juliana's chimney! That is the roof of Pedro's stable," &c.

We said good-bye to the A——s, regretting much that our routes lay in opposite directions. Down the other side of Olvera, and up over a long, bare hill, so bare that there was not anywhere a shrub to cut a switch out of, and we were about to make a rush whip, when we found a heap of vine-cuttings for firewood by a hut on the roadside. After a while, we came to a *cortijo* picturesquely perched on a rock. Here we learnt that we had missed our way, as usual, and were going to Alcala de la Calle instead of Setenil.

As we began to climb a very long and steep mountain flank, a slight shower came on. Looking back, we saw a view which was equal to a drop-scene at a play; and, indeed, in respect of the rain, it might be called a drop-scene itself. A great shaft of sunshine streamed through the broken clouds upon Olvera's

fairy-palace-crowned pinnacle, which gleamed transparent through a spangled robe of showers, girt with the rainbow for a baldrick. This was said upon the spot, and H——, who has a fair appreciation of everything except jokes, thought it rather a fine impromptu, which might be expanded with effect in the voluminous vols.

Having stumbled on these remarkable places by accident, and without any particular recommendation, we naturally concluded that the whole mountain region was full of such. What, then, must Ronda be herself, the queen of them all?

Of course, my enthusiastic Mab is prepared to hear that the approach to this city of refuge for the smuggler,—this massive ganglion of the rugged and inaccessible paths of contraband traffic—this lofty-perched eyry of desperados—climbs by interminable staircase-roads up precipitous ziz-zag ledges to a fortress-crested city, terraced in and out among the jags and chasms of the rock.

But this is not the case. We rode along some wooded table-land at the top of the mountain we had climbed, and after a while found Alcala in a dip—a dismal, poor, wintry, greystone village. Here we baited. On our way to Ronda we met with

nothing remarkable except a board which set forth that a caballero had there been killed by a fall from his horse. The spot seemed eminently appropriate—a rocky, sudden drop in the road, which, if the road had been the bed of a torrent (for which it seemed more adapted than the capacity in which it served), would have made a picturesque little waterfall. We rode down it carefully, and without accident.

It came on mizzly, and we put on our cloaks, which are inconvenient heavy things to ride in, though they certainly keep one dry; we were rather impatient to get to Ronda before the day ended, and were trotting briskly on, when H——'s pony fell, and he and his beast, all enveloped in a voluminous mass of cloak, rolled among the sand and stones. I expected to have to put up another board; but he got up, and was no worse.

Still, Ronda did not appear, which seemed distressing, as we could now see a league and more before us, and there was nothing but a great, blank, round-backed, ordinary hill, over which our road lay; and beyond which, from the nature of the ground, Ronda, such as we fancied Ronda, could not possibly be. After an hour's riding we got over the bleak, round hill, and descended a gentle slope

into a straggling, unremarkable town, which might have been a suburb of Bradford. Very much disgusted we rode down the long, sloping street, and came to the Cristobal Posada. Here we put up, and supped and grumbled.

The rain had stopped, and the broad moon was rising like a great fire-balloon above the mountains, the silver of her beams frosted on the snowy summits around. We went out, for it was cold and wretched in the posada, and came to the edge of a very deep precipice, which falls off like a tremendous sunk fence from the lower end of the new town. We discovered the celebrated bridge, and looked down through gratings upon a dizzy depth of darkness, where, in the indistinct abyss, a rushing of waters echoed.

The view from the bridge, if we had come upon it in a state of mind unembittered by previous disappointment, might have struck us very favourably; for the roaring chasm beneath, the broad, shadowy valley, sunk six hundred precipitous feet before us, and the moonlit snow mountains beyond, formed, no doubt, a cleverish combination in their way. But we had made up our minds to be sulky, and growled at the whole affair; saying that the chasm was no

better than Knaresborough, and the torrent a mere fiz and gush of soda-water. We talked of writing a letter to the "Times," and making a national grievance of it; recommending Lord Palmerston to insist on Ronda's being taken back as a counterfeit, or at least altered so as to come up a little more to the legitimate expectations of the British tourist. Farewell!

LETTER VIII.

Gibraltar, March 5.

HEARTLESS and dilatory woman! We have arrived in Gibraltar; and I am indignant and broken-hearted not to find a letter in the post-office. Thither I rushed within five minutes of alighting on English ground before the portal of the Club House Hotel. I have a great mind not to write you any more of my punctual and profuse accounts of our proceedings, since they seem to interest you so little; or, at any rate, to meet with so inadequate a return. I have been looking forward to a letter from you here, like a thirsty traveller in the desert, but your correspondence turns out a mere sheet of mirage, spread by the heat of impatience over the burning wastes of disappointment.

I began this letter to scold you soundly, but having been betrayed into this metaphor (which, by the way, you may have *met afore*), I feel it would be ridiculous to go on in a solemn strain of vituperation; I shall, therefore, give you (observe, for the last time,

unless you mend your behaviour) some little account of how we got here. First of all, we stayed three days in Ronda—descended into the chasm—sketched the flight of Moorish mills (through which, one after another, the headlong torrent plunges down into the valley), and the high and heavy freestone bridge which joins the cleft-rock summits on which stand the old and new town.

There are certainly some "cleverish" precipices hereabout. From the bluffs at the edge of the new town one can throw a stone down six or seven hundred feet into the valley. One day, I was kneeling with my face over the edge to set off paper parachutes, when both my pistols slipped out of my faja, and clashed on the rock, within a few inches of the brink. They did not, luckily, go over, for I grabbed them in the nick of time; but it quite gave me a turn, and I gave up letting off paper parachutes for fear of tumbling over myself.

The day before we left, we felt a desire for meat, which we had not eaten for some time, living on eggs and chocolate and salad. We sallied forth to the shambles. It was late, and we only found one old woman. She, however, had a whole sheep, lately killed. We got a choice cut, which H—— carried

off under his cloak in his fingers; while I went to the vegetable market over the bridge, and bought half a peck of potatoes. The latter I sliced thin with my dagger, while he haggled the mutton into tatters. He subsequently officiated over the frying-pan in a most artistic manner; but the mutton-steaks turned out lamentably tough.

I made acquaintance with a gunmaker, by whose shop I passed. He admired my pistols. The conversation turned on engraving, and I gave him an extempore specimen of my execution in that department, on a copper coin. He said he could not engrave so well, nor was there any one in Ronda who could: he showed me some of his own handiwork, which was of a very rude character. He took me to be a professional man, and hinted, that if I would work for him, I might make a decent livelihood ornamenting the locks of escopets. He seemed a very good sort of man, and had a pretty daughter.

Riding away from Ronda, it appeared much more to advantage than we had ever seen it before. The old town stands compactly on a moundy hill, behind which the new town is only seen crowning the edges of the precipice; and anybody who wants to be enthusiastic about Ronda, ought

to enter it by the way we left it. From Ronda the road rose a good deal, and we got among the snow. Losing ourselves, according to custom, and scrambling along a very rocky little track which skirted the brow of one of the highest mountains, a vista opened downwards through the peaks, and there stood "the Rock," at about forty miles' distance. The straits of Gibraltar looked like a great blue river, over whose further bank arose the snowy mountains of Africa. It was a very noble view, and we were properly enthusiastic.

However, we were evidently in the wrong road, in which impression we were confirmed by a not very lucid peasant, who could not clearly explain which *was* the right way. Another peasant came up, who said he was going some way in our direction. We followed his guidance down by horribly narrow paths along precipice-ledges, into a valley which had no road to speak of, except the bed of the Xenar, but the scenery was very beautiful. On inquiring whether people ever came that way from Gibraltar, he said he had come that way sometimes on smuggling expeditions.

At one time we thought he was leading us into a trap, when he was hailed by a party of men

with guns sitting on the hill above us. We were not robbed, and parted with him amicably, giving him a cigar and some copper coins. At a mill, by his parting directions, we went up a very steep zigzag path into the mountains; and some time after, crossed a very deep valley, and climbed about sunset, hot and breathless, into a picturesque village on the opposite hill-brow.

As we went up the steep winding street of the village, some women asked us eagerly what wares we brought, and seemed disappointed that we had only materials to make portraits. Near the summit of the place stood a shabby old posada. The stable was entered by a door lower down the hill, but the communication between it and the posada was by a flight of steep, mossy, stone steps, which emerged on the higher level of the court-yard, like the mouth of a well. We had some *miga** and chocolate, and fried eggs, sitting in the deep-niched window of a large vaulted room with arched alcoves, whose nooks and angles took picturesque lights and shadows in the fading hues of sunset.

* Miga is made of bread-crumbs, damped and salted, and fried in oil.

While we were eating, we heard a step at the door, and in walked a serious-looking visitor, with shaggy grey hair. He said nothing, but stood gazing, motionless, with long down-dropped ears, for he was a donkey. He was shortly discovered by the daughter of the house, who was waiting upon us; she instantly flapped a dishclout in his placid, pensive countenance, and he retired without further demonstration of his feelings than slightly shaking his ears.

After supper, when it was dark, we sat by the crackling kitchen-fire. The medico of the place (Ben el Aurin) had dropped in to smoke his cigar by the fire. He was rather a prosaic and sententious personage, who had been in Russia with Napoleon. He inquired about London, which he had understood was "not so large as Paris, and that it was all *pedazos* (disjointed fragments), and mixed up with the sea." The women requested to hear us speak English, and then said, "that it was a language which nobody could understand, not even the birds. There were Englishmen came now and then from Gibraltar. There was Don José, a man of great wealth and dignity—he spoke very clear; he came for shooting in the mountains

with his son,—he was a *sastre* (tailor) at Gibraltar. There were English came through sometimes, who could not speak clear at all."

It was evident they had no idea of another language than Spanish in the world, only that some nations spoke it very unintelligibly. The daughters wanted to know if there was any dancing in our country. We told them that our nation had no taste or genius for dancing, and never invented a national dance of its own except the hornpipe, which they were ashamed to dance in the first society; preferring to imitate, in a limp and spiritless manner, the dances of foreign countries; for to dance with much energy or grace, was in England thought "muy ordinario" (very vulgar).

They wished to see the *hornipipo* danced, and one of the fashionable dances to compare it with; so I danced what I knew of a college hornpipe, eking it out with fugitive reminiscences of the Highland fling. They clapped their hands to keep time, and laughed, as well they might. Then H—— and I performed a *valse à deux temps*, which appeared to them still more eminently absurd. After which the old mother struck up

on the guitar, and all the company danced the fandango.

We slept in our clothes across a very pulicious mattress, and woke with the sun, as he lifted his broad face from the mountain-pillowed horizon. We breakfasted, and departed by a road which seemed a combination of broken pig-troughs filled with melting snow. It soon narrowed to a path not above a foot wide, and my pony took the occasion to slip off backward, and roll with me, end over end, down a drop of about nine feet—(it might just as easily have happened to be ninety). I was luckily no worse, and managed to scramble up to the road again at an easier place a little farther on. It is rather a happy accident, as it will probably make the Moor more cautious. He is very clumsy with his feet, and unused to mountain roads. The day before, when we were scrambling on the rocks, off the road which we had lost, both he and I fell head over heels into a small chasm, which luckily had bushes at the bottom.

At last, we got into the regular road from Ronda to Caucin, from which was another splendid view of Gibraltar and Africa. A league or so

after passing the latter place, the road descended suddenly to the valley of the Guadiaro. At the bottom grew some orange-trees, thirty or forty feet high, and thickly laden with gigantic fruit. We had not had any good oranges among the mountains, where only the refuse come in a bruised state; so we called the man who was up a ladder among the constellation of golden suns. He brought us as many as we could stuff into the vacant capacities of our alforjas, and we gave him a few *cuartos**. The oranges were about five inches in diameter, and excellent. There is a fine, fresh, aromatic flavour about new-gathered oranges from the tree, which those who only know the flat, tasteless, green-picked, box-ripened trash we get in England, would not imagine.

We skirted the banks of the rushing Guadiaro—oleander-fringed—by a good road, the first our horses' feet have touched for a hundred miles. H—— cut an oleander switch for his pony, who was lazy, and it proved tough and useful. As we rode along, we began to talk about what we should do in Gibraltar, which there was some possibility of reaching by

* The cuarto is a shade more than a farthing.

a hard push this very night. It was probable we should know some of the officers; but then we were dreadful figures in our muleteer's costume to present ourselves in civilised society. To be sure, we had some shabby old trousers and shooting-coats for a change in case of wet, in the alforjas; but it was my opinion, that we should do better to go in boldly on the strength of our present vagrant character, than to make a servile and seedy effort at respectability, which no traveller can pack in less than a heavy portmanteau with appurtenances, viz., hat-box, dressing-case, and an umbrella.

H—— was decidedly of opinion, that we ought to show at least an intention of respectability, so as not to outrage the sensibilities of British subjects. I argued, that it did not signify what one did in this world, so long as the perpetrator himself was not ashamed of it. All awkwardness produced in the minds of persons witnessing odd things said or done, arose from the sense of awkwardness in the person doing them communicated by sympathy, and that the most extravagant things might be done with impunity, as long as they were done with an appearance of *bonâ fide* confidence.

"People will not abuse you to your face," he

replied; "but you may depend they will not omit to do so behind your back."

"What people say behind my back I don't so much care, as long as I have no good-natured friend to report it to me." Here you see we were launched upon a general issue of a very vague and desultory character.

"What is the consequence of the world's good opinion of you, except as it affects the world's manner of treating you? Now, I am quite satisfied with the world's treatment of me, which I feel confident is fully equal to, if not beyond, my deserts. If people abuse me behind my back, I am consoled by the idea that they also abuse everybody else, and are abused themselves in turn by me and others."

"If you only care for the opinion of others, as far as you hear it yourself, why should you care for fame after your death, which, of course, you can't hear from anybody's mouth, unless, indeed, you were to make a special injunction to your executors that your body should be eaten by bookworms?"

"I care nothing," said I, "about posthumous fame. When I am dead, it could not cause me to be asked to dinners and balls, and déjeûners and drums, and that is all the worldly use of fame;

except the very equivocal gratification which may arise from having one's worst jokes and most maudlin sentiments laughed at, and listened to with as much *empressement* as one's best—because one is famous; and we certainly do see pottering, old-established reputations who seem to enjoy it."

"If you don't care about posthumous fame," said H—— (you see how soon our argument fell plump into personalities), "why do you take care of such a lot of old scraps and papers, which you never mean to publish while you are alive; perhaps, you will say, they are not at all likely to add to your reputation after death, and therefore are not to be interpreted into any such design."

"I am an author," I replied, growing somewhat sententious, "and I believe that I live for some purpose, otherwise I should not have been created. If I happen to entertain the wish that when I go from this world I may leave upon the prepared paper of literature, some photographic record of how the world's image looked in through the peculiar lens of my individual mind—it certainly is not out of love for that particular stone which falls heir to my name, and stands at the head of my grave. What would it signify to the mouldering dust beneath, or

the disembodied spirit steeped in joy or anguish, which no trifle could disturb, to know that innumerable Smiths, and Jacksons, and Thomsons had got into the way, some hundred years after my demise, of making pic-nic pilgrimages to the picturesque churchyard, and eating pigeon-pie over my graven epitaph-slab? Do you think my spirit would have nothing better to do than come and chuckle unseen, while they scrawled their names upon my monument, erasing a cloud of previous Smiths, and Jacksons, and Thomsons, to make a space for themselves? This is a true vision of that kind of fame which men promise themselves when they say in their hearts 'we will leave a name.' No—when I am dead, I care no more for my name, than for an old hat which can be worn no more. But I would and I hope I shall, leave something, which shall remain, a tissue or a tangle of those rays of beauty and of truth I have been able to draw out, unbroken, as I was unravelling away the web of my existence. I would leave something that should either stand for ever, like an ancient walnut dropping a perennial shower of nuts to be cracked by generation after generation, and only bearing the more for having its lower branches beaten by the

staves of successive critics; or at least like an old apple-tree, which, after the original stump is worn out and forgotten, leaves a fruitful family of grafts in many orchards."

"That sounds all very fine and plausible in theory," replied H——, "but it is not true in practice; for nobody while he is working in this world thinks of himself in the result otherwise than as a living man, which is natural enough, having no experience of what being dead feels like. A man likes to leave a good name after he is dead, because he has found it a pleasant thing while he was alive. How would you like, to put the case the other way, to have some indelible infamy attached to your name for ever?"

"If it was undeserved," said I, "and it came on after death, I should find it no more inconvenient than rottenness—but I should of course be sorry for my relations and descendants, to whom it *would* be an inconvenience to have an unpleasant, unburiable moral corpse of an unjustly supposed immoral ancestor always lying at their door, and offending the metaphorical nostrils of their friends."

In this discourse we arrived before the door of a venta by the banks of the Guadiaro, and as we were

hungry, and our ponies had come a long way, we dismounted. There was a family of gipsies on the tramp, sitting and lying about in picturesque groups, basking in the sun. Two handsome, olive-complexioned boys started up and began to help us to unsaddle. They all, from the wrinkled and bleached old grandmother to the baby in arms, had something sinister and ominous in their swarthy faces, which quite gave us an impression that, in spite of their fair words and courteous smiles, they were cursing us by their devils even when we presented them with the remains of our loaf.

We rode away with all the maledictions on our heads, troubling our heads as little as their own vermin did theirs. We crossed the Guadiaro, which was broad and rapid, and came up to our girths. Passing the venta del Guadiaro, we came to some hills, from the brows of which we looked back on the lofty, ragged mountains which we had slept among last night, and saw their blue peaks all purpled with the carmine sunset. The darkness came upon us in the hollows and dingles of the great cork wood.

Afterwards we emerged upon a dehesa, which seemed endless, and the road was very hard to keep

by the light of the evening star, which, however, shone very broad and clear, as if she meant to do all she could for us. Once I took a ridge of rocks for San Roque; but it appeared as if we should never get to the end of our day's work. We heard the eight-o'clock-gun boom over the bay of Gibraltar and echo from the cliffs of Algeciras, and we hailed with enthusiasm the voice of the British lion. Still on and on, over hill and valley, and knoll and dell, till at last the lights of a real and final San Roque twinkled in the distance.

I was quite knocked up, and on reaching Macrea's hotel, was unable to do justice to the mutton chops and Bass's pale ale, on which we supped. I had just strength remaining to go round the room and rejoice with patriotic eye over the truly British prints with which the walls were hung, principally sporting pieces and illustrations of Harrison Ainsworth's romances. The mahogany sideboard, too, was ranged with many decanters and cruet-stands, and mustard-pots and forks and spoons, —things unknown to the hostels of Spain, where you have your plate and pipkin set before you, and have to pull your own *navaja* (clasp-knife) out of your sash to despatch the comestibles. Sometimes by earnest

entreaty one may get a wooden spoon among a large party; and with the wine-jug they never think of giving two persons more than one glass—but then, of course, the other may drink out of the jug.

I ate a mouthful, and immediately fell asleep, with a long cigar in my mouth. H——, however, considerately routed me up and got me off to bed. He said next morning that he did not believe I ever woke up at all, for I held my candle at right-angles and talked incoherently in Spanish to the English waiter, who seemed much shocked.

This morning I arose quite rested, and on my feed again. Gibraltar was now within a league and half of us, and looked much more striking than any view I had seen of it, going round by sea on the other side. As we were approaching the Spanish lines, along the lapping brink of the calm blue bay, because the beach seemed a shorter cut than the road, we were called to by a sentry keeping watch at the door of a miserable hut, out of which came some soldiers.

"Where are you going?" cried the corporal, in an authoritative tone.

"Where, but to Gibraltar, most intelligent Señor corporal?"

"No se puede por aqui!—you can't go this way, as you well know, and I have a great mind to take you up for trespassing on forbidden ground. What do you mean by leaving the road?"

"We left it '*siguiendo las narices*' ('following our noses,'—a piece of very uncertain Spanish, which made the company laugh)—because it seemed a shorter way. And pray who are you, señor caporalillo, that you venture to disturb gentlemen of importance on the road? I have a great mind to carry you off in my alforjas to the governor of Gibraltar, and have you put into a cannon's mouth, and shot out of one of those little holes in the forehead of the rock, down at your own fortress; which," I continued, pointing to his cabin, "so eminently rivals in strength and magnificence its English neighbour."

As usual, on being bullied they became civiller, but said they had orders to prevent anybody going across this corner of the road, and so we wished them good morning.

Crossing a great number of drawbridges over broad fosses, between successive rims of battery, we passed at length beneath the shoulder of the great rock. The market was crowded with all nations:

Turks and Jews, and Moors and Greeks, in turbans and jillabiahs and fezzes, chattering an immense variety of languages. The long street was full of familiar English faces, and the shop-windows surmounted with familiar English names. People stared at us a little as we rode in, and we heard a gentleman with a white tie and spectacles say to a young gentleman in a very long waistcoat, with a very large gold cable-chain (evidently his travelling pupil), "Look there!—here is doubtless a pair of those picturesque Ronda smugglers Mr. Ford speaks of."—"All serene!" replied the young gentleman, without any tokens of tempestuous interest.

The waiters at the Clubhouse Hotel seemed quite aghast at such an abnormous pair of Englishmen, but we faced them with calm indifference, as if we were quite convinced that all travellers arriving from Spain came in a similar disguise. But it appeared, from the curiosity we excited, that there was something singular about our get-up or get-down, for a crowd gathered to see us alight at the door.

The first thing, as I said before, was to rush to the post-office; the second, to fortify our disappointments with a light lunch of bread and (double Gloucester) cheese and beer; the third, to begin

this letter to you. After writing an hour or so we sallied forth, when, with that aspiring energy which characterises the youth of Britain, we scaled the rock by its most rugged and steep ascent, which, scorning the idea of a guide, we of course hit upon with our usual felicity. After toiling up an interminable and dilapidated flight of steps, on the edge of a wall, we reached the signal station hot and breathless, giving vent to many palpitating maledictions on the oppressive sultriness of foreign *climbs*.

Here the fresh breeze blowing over the razor-edge of the rock's backbone, freshened us up, and we looked over the dizzy precipice, which goes down like a wall on the other side to the rippling blue of the Mediterranean, 1300 feet beneath. "The stately ships sailed in and out of their haven under the hill," and in the excitement of the scene, with two seas and two continents within our horizon, the wandering spirit of the buccaneer of old came strong upon us, and we spake of selling our ponies and buying a shallop, of which H—— (late midshipman R.N.) was to be captain, and I crew. In this we were to sail by Scylla and Charybdis to Carthage, and crossing northward, glide among the Ionian

islands; then, coasting along the winding bays of Asia Minor, touch at Tyre and Sidon, put in at Joppa, and visit Jerusalem.

We descended to be in time for dinner; and learning that it would be dished at gun-fire, went out and waited upon the line-wall to see the ceremony. The following sonnet, in the mild tourist style, will save description.

THE EVENING GUN.

Behind the cloudy cope of Algezir,
The sun upon the western heaven has spread
The glowing curtains of his golden bed—
Night's ebon steeds advancing in his rear,
With shadowy wings pursuing swift, draw near;
While dark'ning vapours from their nostrils sped
Athwart the ridge come sailing overhead,
Where Calpe frowns deep-bastion'd tier o'er tier.

Lo! from her brow a gush of bursting flame,
Whose hot sulphureous breath in silence roll'd,
Mixes among the fleeting vapours cold;—
Hark! the slow thunder breaks with dread acclaim;
And the hush'd ocean trembles, being told
The proud supremacy of Albion's name.

At dinner all the people were talking about the new ministry. While we had been wandering among the mountains, thinking of nobody in the world less than Lord John and Lord Derby, there had occurred a pretty little political crisis. H—— is rather

disgusted, because he has an hereditary confidence in the Whigs. I am apathetic about politics, but I am glad Disraeli is in office at last, for I both believe in him individually, and have a vague general impression that it is better for the country to be governed by men of genius; and I sincerely hope he may carry his cares and budgets lightly, and some day be Prime Minister, over the heads of all the stupid old dukes and pig-headed country squires of the land.

The sentry is crying "Past twelve o'clock!—All's well!"—a striking English sound to ears accustomed to the "Ave Maria purissima!" chanted by *serenos* through the echoing labyrinth of Seville. H—— has been in bed some time, but he asked me to send you "his kindest regards, or something of that sort." So now, good bye; but remember, I am living from day to day on the hope of a letter; and if you have not written by the time you get this, let the knowledge that by that time I shall have been driven to do something desperate, stimulate your languid conscience into remorse when nothing else avails.

Awaiting my destiny, I remain in the interim,

Yours all but desperately.

LETTER IX.

Gibraltar, March 7.

BEST and dearest, two of your precious letters have fallen on me at once, like twin flakes of blessed manna. One of them, which would have been here by my arrival, if it had travelled by sea, went round by France. I am vexed now that I sent you a *cross* letter to scold you, when you had been good and amiable; but it is the fate of distant correspondence to arrive always at the most inopportune time; and I am restrained from saying how delighted and grateful I am, for fear this should arrive at some period hereafter when you want scolding again. Never mind, it will be coals of fire. But, after all, I may as well leave you to imagine, or refer you to some suitable scene in some standard novelist for "the eager eye—the trembling hand—the fluttering heart, &c.," with which I "tore open, &c.," and "devoured, &c."

I am sorry "that horrid Mr. D——, at the E——

ball, bored you to death trying to be amiable;" and then, because you made him one of your saucy speeches—as I have no doubt you did, though you leave it to be understood—that he "bored you still more with impertinent inquiries" about me. Do you know, it is reported by that benevolent section of the world which devotes itself to the arrangement of other people's affairs, that I proposed to you last August, and being refused, fled to a distant clime. That my real complaint is a broken heart, and that I am trying to smelt the pieces together again in the heat of a southern sun; as if hearts were made of red sealing-wax.

And so you don't quite know what to make of that horrid fifth letter about the slain man. You can't think how I can talk so coolly of such a dreadful thing, nor how H—— can have eaten and drunk, and been merry, instead of being haunted day and night by a ghost in the *majo* * costume, clanking a great mass of silver filigree buttons and tags.

In the first place, you know I am very hard-hearted; and as to H——, who is naturally of a less iron disposition, he has been so inured to slaying

* The Majo is the Andalusian dandy, derived from majar (to be resplendent), an Arabic word.—*Ford's Handbook.*

barbarians in the Chinese war, and elsewhere on his various expeditions all over the world, that he has got used to it; and kills a brigand as you would kill a wasp, if you felt sure there was no alternative between doing so and being stung.

Then why did we not go back to Seville, where we were known, and inform the authorities that, in self-defence, we had killed a man?

Why simply because in this slovenly country a process would probably have been instituted in all the profuse and dilatory pomposity of a Spanish law-court, and we should have been kept from our expedition till all Spain was an oven.

Lastly, you are struck with a bright idea, "that it is really almost too horrid to be true, and that you had rather believe it was only one of my stories, such as I used to frighten your little cousins with." If you prefer it, that course is open to you. Then you relapse from this bright idea, and are dreadfully afraid we are already caught by the authorities and languishing in some provincial dungeon, instead of moving on to Gibraltar to receive your letter. And, in conclusion, you enjoin us to take great care of ourselves, and to mind not to shoot any more people for the future, which, if we are languishing in

the above dungeon, seems eminently serviceable, advice.

Now, that I have got news from you, I have agreed to go over the straits to Africa, which, by the way, though H—— has been daily talking of it, we couldn't safely have done yet, for there has been a most tremendous storm raging almost ever since we arrived. A great man of war has run aground in the harbour, and all the shores are strewed with wrecks.

Since writing the above we have been down to the "water-gate," and arranged to go over to-morrow morning if the wind abate, which there is some hope of, as the evening is rather finer. The captain says his vessel will be laden with corn and Jews—a curious cargo. We have done and seen nothing worth mentioning here in the last three or four days, because of the foul weather. We have sat at our window sketching the strange figures of Jews and Pagans standing on the line wall, apparently anxious for the arrival of expected crafts, perhaps sunk in the tempest. They are usually very restless and difficult to draw. There is one funny old Turk in particular, who amuses us the most, a crooked old figure in a large white turban and blue *boornoos*, who goes flapping about in his wet yellow slippers, peeping

anxiously through a large pair of spectacles under a huge green umbrella. I must finish this short letter, so as to be ready for the post in case we set sail to-morrow. I will write you a longer one from Tangier.

Yours, etc.

LETTER X.

Africa, March 9.

I THINK my Mabel will allow that there is a solemn grandeur of simplicity in this date—an assumption of continental completeness; as if, by the first step on shore, one had put one's foot into the whole boot of Africa. You would have laughed if you could have seen us land. A quantity of yelling savages, above their knees in the surf, hardly waited for the keel to cleave the sand, before they plunged upon us, like schoolboys over a handful of nuts, and carried us off after a severe scramble. The three or four who set me down on the sand, immediately became vociferous for *bakshish*. To keep them a little at bay till I could get out a small bit of silver, it occurred to me to twirl rapidly round, clearing a circle in the press with the heavy swing of my cloak held by the collar.

But I have begun in the middle, and ought first to have told you how we got across the Straits. The

wind had gradually fallen in the night, and at breakfast a message came from the captain that he was only waiting for us. The felucca which we were to sail in seemed very deep laden. Arriving aboard, the captain asked us if we had our bills of health, which we had not.

"Then you will have to go back," said he, "otherwise you will not be able to go ashore at Tangier." He sent his mate back with us.

The old Moorish merchant, who was in a tremendous stickle to get his wheat to the market at Tangier, and who had probably been already using disrespectful language towards our great-grandmothers for their somewhat remote instrumentality in keeping the vessel waiting—now finding that something was forgotten, and that still further delay was about to take place—grew quite pale with fury, and began to scream and gesticulate in the most frantic manner, wringing his hands and tearing his turban; so that he had to be held by the sailors, to prevent him from doing something desperate.

The stout old Cerberus guarding the portals of the Bill of Health Office, on the quay, told us in Spanish to wait. With a great burst of indignant breath, I cried, "Porqué?" (why?)

"Porqué; because his worship the Commissioner is engaged."

"Engaged! What is that to us? Let him engage himself without delay in making out our bill of health. Engaged, forsooth! when very principal caballeros have their vessel waiting with a fair wind for Africa!"

All this bluster did not move him in the least, but the mate bethought himself of a remark which we should never have hit on.

"These are English gentlemen," said he; and this simple truism had the most electrical effect on the old Gibraltese porter, who, by our dresses, had taken us for Spaniards. Up he jumped, with, "Beg pardon, gentlemen," and showed us in—where the old clerk, who must have heard all that passed at his door, looked rather ashamed of himself—and we had what we came for in a jiffy. He made a job of us, nevertheless, drawing us out two separate bills where one would have done for a whole ship's company, as ours, in fact, *did*. This accounted to us for the seemingly inexplicable patience with which the captain waited for us, though we had made a bargain to go very cheap. He had no other bill of health on board, and without us could not have landed. On

our re-arrival a-board, as all our small change had been expended on the bills of health, the old Moor, in his anxiety, gave us money to pay the boatmen, and the felucca was under sail in less than two minutes, tumbling heavily along over the rolling seas which the late storms had left behind. From the angle of Algeciras we steered towards the Gibel Moosa (Mountain of Moses), the other Pillar of Hercules, and a much larger one than Calpe, being nearly 6000 precipitous feet above the beach. A fine rugged pile of dark rock, frowning like an Æthiop giant, a vast continent's worthy sentinel, with a fillet of white cloud drawn athwart his swarthy brow.

On board, beside the corn-merchant, there were two other Moors, younger men, whom we took to be his sons, and about thirty Jews of all ages. They seemed to be in a state of exuberant hilarity on their approaching return to their native country. They were now crowding round the purser of the vessel, a Hebrew also, who had in his hand a roll, written in the cursive Hebrew character, seeming to be a list of names, with sums in dollars and reals opposite each. Set on the closed hatchway, which served as his *comptoir*, was an open money-bag,

from which he was disbursing small sums to a group with greedy eyes, and hooked, avaricious fingers outstretched for their share. So eager and clamorous were his customers, that one of the sailors had to be stationed near with a rope's-end to keep them a little in order.

It appeared, on inquiry, that they were a party of beggars, brought over on speculation by the purser, to exercise their calling on the British sympathies and pockets in Gibraltar. He had kept their purse, and was now distributing the proceeds of their respective earnings, after deducting their passage and keep on the Rock, with no doubt a moderate per-centage to remunerate himself for the risk and trouble of the undertaking. The man's hypocritical, smooth, oily face, with twinkling, sharp, grey eyes, under a sloping, wicked cast of brow, would have made a good study for a Judas; whom I imagine always as a smiling, plausible rogue, not the scowling, perspicuous traitor he is usually painted.

Among the others, too, there was a great number of picturesque heads, with a great variety of beards: but the nobly cut features were generally disfigured by a mean, servile expression. Our sketch-books were brought out of the faithful alforjas, which still

accompanied us, but the Israelites seemed to entertain a strong objection to having their likeness, which they considered as a part of themselves, taken from them. The victim usually covered up his head in the cowl of his *jillabiah* (a sort of grey striped coarse woollen shirt, with a peaked and tasselled hood), and it was only from stolen glances, when his curiosity to see what was going on overcame his horror of being drawn, that we could gather a few faint resemblances. These, however, were immediately recognised as exact portraits by the bystanders, who, as long as they were not pitched upon themselves, were much amused and delighted.

The sketch-books were soon shut up by a sharp shower, and all the company huddled together under bits of tarpaulin, and bits of board, which four or five would prop on the tops of their heads. The Moor and his family crept into some empty cases, in which they had probably brought merchandise to Gibraltar. We in the stern were tolerably protected by the three-cornered mizen-sail. A little Hebrew boy, who crept for shelter nearer to me than the purser's ideas of etiquette approved, was commanded to "quitar se d'arriba del Cristiano" (to remove himself from above the Christian), which rather

struck my fancy, it having never occurred to me before to be so specially designated by my faith.

When the shower was over and the accounts of the mendicity scheme settled, I asked Judas Iscariot to let me look at the list, and to explain the alphabet to me. I wrote out a few of the first lines of Genesis, and got him to write it in the cursive character. The two young Moors, seeing a writing lesson going on, came to look, so I suddenly changed my pencil, and ran off in one of my favourite quotations from the Koran; whereupon the infidels began to exclaim, and we at once fraternised on the strength of a mutual, though probably, on both sides, a very slight acquaintance with the writings of Mahomet.

We entered into a sort of heterogeneous conversation, mingling for its elements the little they knew of Spanish with the little I knew of Arabic. One of them, who proved to be a barber, had a talent for drawing, and illustrated his discourse on the beauty and magnificence of Tangier, with a sketch of the mosque tower. He drew quite in a medieval style, with broad black lines. At the top of his tower was a turbaned Muezzin with a speaking-trumpet, which, if he had dropped it

perpendicularly from the mouth-piece, would have touched the ground. Still higher, was a tremendous square stiff flag with a crescent in the middle, drawn with a gigantic minuteness of attention to the rings, and pulleys, and cords, which were to hoist it on the staff. Beside it, in the same style, he drew a fort with bomb-shells flying in all directions.

On approaching Tangier the hilarity of the Jews, which had been damped by the shower, revived in such force, that the functionary of the rope's-end thought it necessary to admonish them playfully over their heads and shoulders. They all received his chastisements with a cringing humility except one, whom the Christian bully evidently held in respect.

This was a young man, the most uproarious of the party, but his figure was a model for a young Samson in all the pride of his strength: such a brawny breadth of back and shoulders, depth of chest, and massive mould of sinewy limbs! The consciousness of superior power gavė him both dignity and impudence. The sailor who was bullying the rest seemed ashamed to spare the worst offender altogether, and occasionally gave him a mild flick, whereupon he would lay hold of him

and turn him about like a child, and laugh, showing a wide mouthful of teeth set in all directions, like *chevaux de frise.* His whole countenance was equally hideous, but there was a broad, bestial good-humour and boldness, and wealth of animal spirits in the expression, which clothed the whole man, taken together, with a sort of ugly beauty and coarse nobility, difficult to describe. He had offered to carry us ashore. He set his services at a *peseta,* about elevenpence, which we rejected with scorn. He immediately went off in an extempore Gitanesque style of song in the indifferent Spanish, which is the habitual language of the Tangier Jews.

SAMSON'S SONG.

As our vessel cut the billows,
Coming into Tangier bay,
To the haughty, rich Inglese,
Thus I spoke, and this did say.

"See the surf is white and frothy,
Lashed upon the yellow sand—
I am poor, and wear no small-clothes,
I will bear my lord to land."

"If you bear me through the water,
What's your price—the smallest sum?"
For Inglese loves to bargain,
And the gold sticks to his thumb.

"I demand but one peseta,
One peseta and no more."
"Dog!" he cried "thou shalt not cheat me,
Sooner will I wade ashore."

This impromptu, delivered in a rough sonorous voice, with much spirit and humour, in a lively trochaic (I beg your pardon for a hard word, I mean trundling) metre, was received with laughter and applause.

The town of Tangier stands on a slope within the western horn of the bay. On the horn is a ruinous old fortress, up to which the town rises in a flight of flat-topped houses, with here and there a few towers and minarets; it is in fact like any ordinary picture of an Eastern city.

When we emerged from the skirmish on the beach we were still followed by a stately old Moor, with a clean white turban, who seemed in a tranquil manner to have made up his mind that we were now become part of his private property. He talked a peculiar Spanish.

"Señora Inglesa tengo fonda aqui riba." (An English lady has an hotel up here.)

"Oh, that's it," said H——. "He belongs to Miss Duncan's hotel, that's all right."

"Yéz, gen-men, me Mohammed, all right, belongy to Miss Duncan Hotel. Tought gen-men was Spanis; me talk Inglis same as Spanis. Zat mosky! muslemân jurje," said he, as we passed the

arched doorway of the mosque, and saw turbaned figures kneeling here and there within.

We followed him up the main street to the market-place, the inhabitants staring at us out of their pigeon-hole shops. At last, through narrow, dirty, winding streets, we reached the hotel, and slammed the door in the face of a train of infidel ragamuffins, who were following us for bakshish. The house, a curious old Moorish dwelling, is fitted up with English comfort and furniture. At dinner, we were waited on by the majestic Mahomet and a meek Jew, Moses, whose shambling gait and down-cast look formed a contrast to the imperial port and solemn strut of the picturesque old Pasha. Moses, however, was practically far the more serviceable man of the two.

Since dinner I have been writing.

Our venerable and attentive hostess paid us a visit, and told us about many remarkable persons, who have been here during the nine-and-twenty years she has lived in Tangier, with many things which they did and said; but the only vivid picture which this chronicle has left on my memory is of the amiable and condescending manner in which the Marquis of G—— dried a pair of silk socks over the

charcoal brazier in the kitchen; an historical fact which occurred about nine years ago.

The moon is glancing in through the open window from the spangled ripples of the bay, but I am too sleepy to be poetical, so good night, dearest. I will make a long journal letter of this, for there will be plenty of time here.

This morning, before breakfast, I stopped before one of the little shop-nooks in the main street, where a grim and bearded Pagan sat cross-legged, and began to bargain with him for a pair of bright-yellow morocco-leather slippers. While the treaty was proceeding, a sleek and officious Jew came up, under pretence of interpreting, and insinuated that *he* had better and cheaper slippers at his shop. I thought, perhaps, he was no greater rogue than others, and so I went with him, and found a very smart establishment upstairs, with a great variety of shawls and scarfs, and jillabiahs, and Moorish cushions, and daggers, and every sort of curiosity, the only thing which appeared to be deficient were yellow slippers. In the patio of the house there was a plasterer, or whitewasher. While I was looking over the things, he had slipped out, and when I came into the street, he fell upon me with strong

entreaties to inspect *his* shop somewhere else, but I told him he was a whited sepulchre, and went back to breakfast.

Wandering about the town, we came to the foot of the castle hill. At the top there was a gateless and dilapidated arch, amenable to pacific entry, and within, a picturesque, irregular court-yard, partially in ruins, with horse-shoe arches, and slender arabesque columns. Sauntering in through the archway, we had been passed by a handsome maiden, bearing a basket, whom we knew, by being unveiled, to be a Jewess. At a modest distance we followed the fair Susannah among the winding angles and corners of the ruin. She went in at a low, broad arch. Here we were received by a grizzly-bearded old man in a turban, with a couple of large keys in his belt. Him we saluted with "*essalâm aleykom*" and a bow.

"*Waleykom essalâm,*" he replied. "Ye, oh caballeros, are apparently Spanish," he continued, in slow, strangely-accented Castilian, "and are doubtless come to see the prison."

"We are come to see the prison, truly, but we are not Spanish, being, *shokr Allâh,** of the family of the Inkleez."

* Thanks be to God!

"Thrice welcome, sons of the Inkleez; I am the father of the prison," said he, making a salaam; "and ye shall see my children." He then poured out some coffee from a pipkin which stood over a few charcoal embers. He made many excuses for only having one cup in his coffee-service, and lit a long chibouque, from which we each smoked a few whiffs after we had taken a few sips of the coffee.

"But who is that fair maiden whispering through the hole in the door?"

"She is Rahab, the daughter of one Joshua, an old rogue, who lately sold a donkey to one of the faithful for more *dirhems** than it was worth, even if it had not been bewitched; but bewitched it was, and died within a week; and the old dog will remain in my family till he refunds the price. His daughter often brings him food in her basket. He is by far too well off, the old thief, and if he were starved a little he would give up his dishonest gains much sooner; but the other day, when I told her she must come no more, she cried so bitterly, saying the old man would die, that I could not find it in my heart to refuse her; for the she-wolf of an unbelieving Jewess has fair eyes, and it pinches my heart to see her

* Pieces of silver money.

weep. Daughter of the accursed, stand aside, and let these gentlemen look through the door."

A most foul, black, damp and dismal place it was; the crowded prisoners squatting about here and there on the floor, which was like the pavement of a stable, on an old-fashioned farm where ammonia is not economised. The ancient Joshua was standing near the door, his long white beard wagging as he chewed.

While we were looking, there was a noise at the outer gate, and a fresh offender was brought in. He was an old acquaintance, having only been let out of prison a week ago, and now he had been caught again, stealing a bunch of carrots in the market-place. He was very vociferous in his defence, but in the most brilliant crisis of his harangue, as soon as he had been shouldered opposite the prison-door, it opened with a crash of bolts and chains—they gave him a slap on the back, and in he leapt, head foremost, over the high stone threshold; the door crashed to again, and there was an end of him. There was something irresistibly ludicrous in the extremely sudden disposal of this turbulent purloiner of vegetables, of which a description, necessarily telling a number of simultaneous

occurrences one after another, can give but little idea.

We presented the prisoners with a small contribution for bread, which they clamorously demanded, and gave the father of the prison a large cigar. Going out of the castle, we sat down on a stone bench along the wall, beneath the shade of a tower. Here a small crowd of infidels gathered to see us light our pipes with a burning glass, after which they wished to have their fingers burned; and we fell into a religious discussion, carried on at first by short staves from the Koran, of which, having exhausted our stock ineffectually, we finished off the argument with our long broomsticks; these we applied to their shins; for they could not keep their tempers when we quoted Mahomet to prove that both Christians and Jews might be saved, if they believed in God and the last day, and did virtuously.

As we descended through the town, we were seized upon by Israelites and carried to many shops, where they took us in, but we would not buy anything, for I saw nothing so good as the smart warehouse up-stairs, which I had seen before breakfast. Thither we went and instituted a general rummage. Jillabiahs, haiks, boornooses, fez-caps,

cushions, &c. H—— told me that a *haik* was considered a most desirable thing by young ladies, as a dress to go away from evening parties in.

I always wonder, for my part, why fair creatures are so particular about a costume to go home in their dark carriages; but perhaps it is for the sake of the last impression they leave on the carpeted door-step, to haunt the dreams of some shivering adorer, who stands in the night air till John has slumped the tight door into the panel—the sleepy horses plunge heavily forward, and Lady Something Else's carriage stops the way.

While I was wavering whether to lay out on one of these Moorish veils, which are of a curious white woollen texture, striped or shot, or something of that sort, with silk, the cunning old Jew sent for his daughter.

She came up very slovenly attired, but they hung the haik upon her, and she looked so pretty in it that I purchased one without more ado. It, indeed, effected in her a great metamorphosis, covering up all the slovenly attire in soft white drapery, and showing only a most fascinating pair of Jewess's eyes (worth more than Jews' eyes), some stray tresses of deepest jet, &c.; for this recital will not interest you much, nor did it me, indeed, but H——was much struck.

She could not persuade him, however, to buy one, though she vividly depicted the disappointment of his *novia* (sweetheart), at not getting one when mine did; and he was forced to confess, with a sigh, that he had no novia, on which she pitied him, but said he must take heart, for he was sure to find one soon, and ought to have a haik ready for her. I have little doubt he envied me, poor fellow, the pleasure of preparing masquerading disguises for the queen of that unhandsomely limited harem, which European prejudices admit; and of imagining how a certain vain little queen, who shall be anonymous, will some day admire herself in her looking-glass, arrayed like a real Tangerine Sultana in haiks and boornooses, and slippers of scarlet morocco leather, embroidered with gold. I am an ungracious wretch, very!

Afterwards we looked in at the place where they smoke *keef;* a dirty, sloppy patio, little better than the prison. The smokers were squatting about inhaling the fumes of very small pipes, and rolling up their eyes as if it was very delightful. In the corner a man sat whittling pipe-stems in curious arabesque patterns. The demand apparently exceeded the supply, for he had only one on hand, which was also in hand, and on my offering to buy

it, he said he must finish it; I said I had rather not wait, for I could finish the other end, copying the pattern of the one already done. We bought keef, which appears to be a small leaf, growing along a certain kind of hemp stalk, and retired to our house-top to make the experiment.

Our imaginations were filled with a forecast of the brilliant dreams about to draw their magic-lantern shadows across the white sheet of the lulled mind. I knew well enough whither away *my* spirit would flee to be at rest, and my heart beat loudly as I lit the little pipeful of what seemed very like sawdust. But though I drew breath after breath, down to the very bottom of my lungs, and vigorously prepared to be much affected, I could not perceive that it produced any effect whatever, nor could H——. He disliked the peculiar flavour of the herb, which I found rather agreeable than otherwise. After smoking three or four pipes the experiment was given up as a failure.

In the meantime a (no doubt) lovely creature, entirely enveloped in her haik, was walking about on the adjoining roof. She seemed inclined to pay us, at least, the compliment of curiosity, and stared us so much out of countenance through her eye-holes,

that we were forced to go to the other side of the roof. Here we saw a cat take a run and a flying leap over the narrow street, and we could not help observing that the gay Lotharios of the East no doubt watch circumspectly how the cat jumps. The houses, which are very inaccessible every way but from the top, stand so close together, that a good leaper might easily travel from one end of the town to the other on their roofs. They are all detached from one another, at a distance which is no doubt deemed safe by lethargic old Orientals, bundled in long robes, against all eaves-droppers. Besides, *lepers* are turned out of Eastern cities.

Summoned down-stairs by the Jews coming with what we had bought in the morning, they nearly cleared us out of all our little means, for in Gibraltar we could not raise any money, because H—— had left all his Coutts's circular notes packed up in his portmanteau at Seville; and as there appears to be no vessel going back to Europe, it is more than probable that our excellent landladies, the Misses Duncan, will have to distrain upon our bodies, and sell us to the Algerines to indemnify themselves for our sustenance.

While I sat carving the pipe-stem, our early dinner

was ready, after which we wandered forth with Hamed. The corn-merchant of the felucca met us, shook hands with great cordiality, and insisted on taking us to a coffee-house to be treated, up a narrow flight of dark stairs into a narrow patio covered with matting. Here were assembled a group of chattering Moors all standing, for there was no place in the floor clean enough to sit down upon.

Coming down from the *café*, we were met by another of our fellow passengers, the young Moor who had drawn the mosque towers and fort in H——'s book. He also shook hands most affectionately, and carried us over the way to his shop, for it turned out he was a barber, and not a son of the old corn-merchant. His shop was surrounded by a sort of divan, covered with matting, on which we sat cross-legged and smoked and drank more coffee, and talked as well as we could in Alcoranic Arabic, which is very different from Berber.

A lame man came in and sat down. He addressed us in broken English. He was from Mogador, and had been in London with Batty's Company as a Bedouin. He had been in other parts of "London," viz., "Littlepol and My Sister (Liverpool and Manchester), had married wife in England" ("not lowsy

woman"), he had had an accident which caused his leg to be very "sick" ever since—had come back here to go home to Mogador, but had here set up as a gunsmith—he had a gun which he could sell us ("not lowsy gun") at a moderate price.

The dark had crept upon us unperceived. A pious faquir came by, and stopping on the threshold, swang about a censer scattering incense, and vociferating prayers. This itinerant mass-performer was rewarded with a copper coin and departed. Then came a man with a young cock. The barber jumped up and cut off its head with a razor in a most expeditious manner, and the fowl-bearer departed. I asked if people did not kill their own chickens in this country, and was informed that many persons had an objection to shedding blood, and were in the habit of sending to him. Doubtless he must have shed a considerable amount of the blood of the faithful, if he shaves their heads with the same razor which decapitates poultry.

Hamed now informed us that he had heard there was a Jewish wedding to-night, whither he would conduct us if we pleased. As the Hebrews hold open house on these occasions to all creeds and nations, we followed him through the dark winding

streets, till we came to an open portal, where flaring torches gleamed on a swarm of people going in and out.

The supper was just concluding, the tables were removed, and we were seated in the banqueting-room in the highest place, that is to say, nearest the right hand corner of the nuptial bed, which filled the whole end of the room. What do you think there was on the bed? Why, about six-and-thirty Jewesses, the loveliest collection of women huddled in the smallest space I ever saw. Positively all beautiful, and if my heart had not been otherwise engaged, I should not have minded marrying the whole bevy at once—foolish indeed!—nevertheless an idea worthy of Solomon. The young ladies, it appears, were only invited to *adorn* the banquet with their presence, and set up there to be looked at while their male relatives ate. In the furthest corner, as much out of sight as possible, and veiled, sat the bride: poor thing! she must have been very nearly smothered under that cloth, for we could hardly breathe, and the heat and crush were tremendous even to us who sat on a bench, unveiled and unsurrounded by a compact huddle of three dozen fair friends on one four-poster.

But now there was a stir, and the chief Rabbi was conducted to the head of the bench opposite us. In his hand he bore a fiddle on which he began to play across his knee as if it had been a bass; but it was a small violin, and he was a large man with a long white beard and a pair of silver spectacles over a very large hooked nose. When he began to play the guests began to howl an accompaniment with great unction. Shortly a ring was formed, and a blooming Herodias was picked from that hot-bed of lilies and carnations to dance before the company. The dance seemed to be more of gesture than steps—she swayed about her body, and waved about her arms, but the steps seemed hardly more than occasionally beating time with her feet. The company beat time with their hands, and howled still more than before, so as nearly to drown the screeches of the *rabbi'd* fiddle.

When the dance was done the bride was brought in unveiled; she had been smuggled out behind the bed and attired in the first of a series of suits, which she subsequently showed off in succession. She was a beautiful creature, with that brilliant pearly complexion, those lustrous eyes and glossy

raven tresses, which only Tangerine Jewesses possess in such perfection. The bridegroom, I am grieved to say, was a sorryish looking individual, who seemed in no wise to appreciate the happiness he was about to undergo; he appeared nervous and melancholy: and, to make the matter worse, they set him down in a chair in the middle of the room, and shaved him before the audience. After this there was a contribution, whether to pay the barber or the supper, or to increase the dower of the bride, we could not clearly ascertain; but we paid up our bachelor's mite and departed, much gratified and nearly baked.

This morning as we were sitting on the brow of the castle hill, there appeared to be a commotion of some sort in a broad open space near one of the gates of the city below. Going down to see what it was, we were soon met by a crowd coming up the narrow street. They were headed by musicians, with tamtams (a sort of kettle-drums) and trumpets and fifes. A Moor, with a white beard, led a calf. Next came a turbaned figure enveloped in much drapery, riding on a black horse with two huge panniers, out of which appeared the mild, resigned faces of two venerable old rams. A few men, with

very long firelock muskets followed—the rest were tag-rag and bobtail. Under the last denomination we enlisted ourselves, and returned with the crowd to the castle hill, from which we commanded the house of the bride—for it was a marriage procession, at least one of the preparatory measures.

The band played a strange discordant combination of noises, interrupted at irregular intervals by the explosion of firelocks. The firing of these unwieldy engines was curious. The musketeer about to discharge, balances himself gingerly on his left heel, points the muzzle at the ground and applies the smoking end of his long, salt-petred cord—fizz! flash! bang!—and round he spins, twirled on his heel by the recoil of his long, rusty piece. We could see inside the open door a good many veiled Moriscas. What came of the calf and rams we did not see; they probably were wedding gifts not sacrifices, and destined to figure in the capacity of veal and mutton at some subsequent ceremony.

Waiting for the muezzin's call to prayer, with many of the faithful around us in the market-place, H—— was moved to address them with the last speech and confession of the Moor of Venice, and

when he came to the words "smote him thus," hit the most prominent starer a slight tap on the head with his broomstick. We are always followed up and down the streets by an escort of about thirty or forty ragamuffins, and if we did not carry a staff a-piece we should find it difficult to stave off the press. A respectable Moor sitting at the gateway of the mosque offered us long pipes (which we smoked), and made ineffectual efforts to disperse the crowd, which we begged him not to do.

A shoemaker over the way invited us all to his stall to drink verbena tea, which, he assured us, along with a pipe of keef, would have the same effect upon us as brandy. The *yerba buena* (*Arabicè* Luisa) makes a pleasant infusion, but does not possess any intoxicating qualities; at least we departed as sober as we came.

To-day I have gone about in the Moorish costume, but have not been less stared at from dressing like any other pagan; a crimson skull-cap with a blue silk tassel; a loose, blue and white striped, shirtlike robe of woollen; with a long cowl, either drooping behind the shoulders or pulled up over the head. I call the cowl long, because it goes back in a long peak like the tail

of a fishing-net, and has a tassel at the end. A pair of bare ankles and yellow slippers complete the costume as far as visible to the world at large. I have been standing in theatrical threatening attitudes for H—— to draw me, but the folds of the drapery are difficult to do, and he has hung up the jillabiah against the wall to make a study of it. It looks, with its extended sleeves and cowl stretched down from the nail on which it hangs, like a grey, extenuated, long-necked ghost of a Bedouin Arab, or Capuchin friar, pinned up in great torment against the walls of Purgatory.

It is night. We have just come in from a most awful scene. Rolling clouds of smoke, lit by the red flash, and rent and shaken by the explosion of musketry; parties of Arabs charging about here and there beneath the sulphurous canopy, shouting as well as shooting. What do you think it was? An insurrection? No—A wedding. The red heifer and the rams had only been preparatory, and to-night the bride was to be conducted to the house of the bridegroom. These skirmishers were merely making ready an atmosphere with the smoke of their *feux de joie* for the procession to pass through.

At last it appeared. Around the howdah (a sort of

sedan chair in which the bride is carried) the Arab soldiers redoubled their activity, charging, one party upon another, and discharging their long guns into the air. Flaring torches flung a flickering and uncertain light over the tumultuous but rather formidable chaos through which the timid Moorish maiden goes from the nursery to house-keeping. We could not help thinking that in happy England some of our hardened and experienced spinsters, who have braved the linkboys and "carriage-stops-the-way-coming-out," struggles of three or four seasons, would hardly go through such a trial in the cause of matrimony—but perhaps we were wrong!

I shall finish off this letter, which I have contrived to make very dull, although we have been very much amused since we have been in Africa. Perhaps *because*, rather than *although*; for when the mind is kept constantly amused the spirits fly off in talking and laughing, instead of being bottled like Seltzer water for literary exportation. There are many other strange and agreeable things we have done here, which, if they were written in a letter, would stretch to a still more tedious length than this. When the post will go, or when we shall get away, cannot be predicted with any certainty, for we hear

of no vessels going back to Europe, so that it seems likely we *shall*, after all, have to be disposed of to the Algerines. I remain, in the meantime, yours till my release from captivity.

LETTER XI.

Gibraltar, March 14.

ONCE more in the same continent with my own Mabel,—it really almost feels like coming home again, to get back to the dear old Rock. But how did we get back? I think we left ourselves with rapidly declining finances, and no prospect of a vessel to carry us away from the African coast. Shall I tell you how we got impatient at last, and hired a little boat, and were betrayed by our crew into the hands of a cruel pirate captain from the Mogador coast — who sold us as slaves up the interior—whence we escaped, with a couple of black princesses, and reached the spot where the Nile and Niger are tied together in a knot, which, of course, we undid—and how each of us built a boat and sailed away, one down the Niger, and the other down the Nile, with a moving panoramic journal of the scenery,—how our boats subsequently met off Europa Point, and we sailed into Gibraltar bay

together, both having, unfortunately, or fortunately, lost our black princesses on the way!

This, with a few episodical treatises on the kingdoms of Abyssinia, Timbuctoo, &c., and an excursion to the happy valley (entered by an accidental discovery of the celebrated Rasselas tunnel through the mountains of the moon) will make an interesting chapter in the voluminous vols. By-the-bye, you asked me in one of your letters what was to be the plan of our work, and how we should manage to write it together? was it to be in the Lee and Cooper style—landscape by one and groups by the other? I will tell you.

We have decided that the world is, or at least ought to be, sick of the ordinary, stupid accounts of ordinary unromantic goings up and down in the earth, related for the most part with fatal fidelity, except when their authors attempt to enliven them here and there with painfully improbable drafts on their imagination. Therefore we agreed, without a dissenting voice, that, about this period of our literature, something eminently new and original was demanded in the "Voyages and Travels" department.

Here is our prospectus, which you must keep a

profound secret. I am to write a mass of (fictitious) adventure and (invented) legendary anecdote, interspersed with romantic ballads, and indeed, whether poetry or prose, enveloped in a moonlit haze of sublimity. H—— is to follow each chapter with a plain unvarnished recital of what actually did occur. And a conversation, in which each writes his own share of the dialogue, will explain to the public how the ideas of the adventures and legends arose, or were suggested: with a body of bold criticism and acute remark, not strictly confined to the point whence the discussion started, but rambling through space and matter, and time and eternity, with much liveliness and versatility.

The disadvantages of such a course will be, that the critics will call it flippant; and the stupid public, which likes to be gulled rather than enlightened, will wish all the impertinent matter, such as the true statement and the discursive criticism, at Jericho; however, this class of readers will be warned to read only the fictitious part, and recommended, in order to keep up their interest, to believe every word of it.

But I have to get back from Tangier. We were almost in despair, when one morning a great steamer

ran into the bay. It proved to be a French war-steamer, bringing a consul-general; for the republic has made up some little difference with the empire of Morocco, which caused the consul to retire some time ago. This steamer was going back to Gibraltar next morning, so we lost no time in calling to pay our respects to the newly arrived functionary. We were shown up into a Parisian-looking drawing-room, and a beau monsieur, of about thirty-five, dressed in a smart official uniform, arose to receive us. His good manners could hardly prevent a look of surprise from mingling with that appropriate listening face with which he bowed and stood waiting for us to explain our errand. We felt that in our soiled but still flaring muleteer's dress we did not look like the proper sort of individuals to ask for a free passage on board a man-of-war of a foreign power. I waited for H—— to say something, but he said nothing; and so, after a slight pause, I began to state our case.

"Tant soit peu qu'il doit paraître, nous sommes des gentilshommes Anglais,—we are dressed as contrabandiers, because we have been travelling among the mountains of Spain, and have no other clothes, otherwise we would not have ventured to present ourselves attired so little *à la mode*."

"Mais, messieurs, n'en parlez pas je vous en prie. Cela se voit fort bien, et du reste, c'est une mise assez commode pour voyager. Moi aussi, j'ai voyagé en Espagne. Is there any thing I can do for you?"

"We are *au désespoir* for a vessel to take us back to Europe; and we understand that the steamer which brought your excellency is going back to Gibraltar; we are ashamed to derange you on your arrival, but we have no alternative."

"With the greatest pleasure, gentlemen: ce sont de petites complaisances que les nations se font mutuellement."

With which, having been thus made an international affair, we were handed two small state-papers, requesting the captain to receive us aboard; and we took leave of our polite benefactor with many thanks.

That evening, taking a turn through the city for a farewell look, some camels, with wilder-looking Arabs than common, came in at the western gate from the distant deserts of the interior. We felt on seeing them more identified with the real inhabitants of Africa than we had been by our intercourse with the tame barbarians of Tangier, so much handled by Europeans as to be comparatively harmless, like

Zoological Garden lions. Two Ethiopians, in the same quarter of the city, which seems devoted to strangers from the interior, sat cross-legged on the ground, rocking themselves, and nodding their heads, and rolling up the yellow whites of their idiotic eyes, with their thick lips dropped, and their dark brown, oily features (without the slightest vestige of consciousness) shining in the sunset. We asked what was the matter with them, and found they had been chewing *hasheesh.*

But I must get away from Tangier, for we have to get away from Gibraltar to-morrow, and our history is trailing at a deplorable distance behind. And yet I must tell you of a conversation we had with a worthy clergyman of the Church of England, who arrived the day before our departure, and with whom we partook of our last African tea. It was about carrying arms or not, travelling in Spain. He was strongly against the practice, for fear we might shoot some of the banditti. We said we were much more afraid of the banditti shooting us, and very much preferred being on equal terms with them.

"But," said he, "you have no right to shoot a fellow-creature, merely to prevent yourself from being robbed; and if, as you say, you are called

upon to go down on your face, and give up your money, you should do so much rather than shed blood."

"No doubt," I replied, "if they amiably took what you gave them, and your word for it that you had no more valuables, and did not proceed to strip you of your clothes, and take your horse; and if, after all, when dissatisfied with their gleanings, they had not an unkind habit of rubbing the traveller's nose on a flinty road; by way of fertilizing the soil —nay sometimes killing him outright,—I agree that your argument would be good. But as it is, with all these possibilities, added to the inconvenience of losing one's money, costume, and horse, my impression is, that the most reasonable thing to do, when an evident and acknowledged bandit rushes out of the bushes and seizes your rein, is not to say, 'Sir, I have money which I am ready to surrender, and pistols, with which I will fight, if you intend to use me uncivilly;' for then he would have time to throw his cloak over your head, and stick you at leisure with his navaja."

"Then, sir, what is the most reasonable thing to do?"

"Why, to shoot him down at once, and do the

same to the next man" (suiting the action to the word, and taking my revolver out of my belt, on which the ancient and reverend gentleman cried, "Oh! pray don't!" in a tone of some anxiety), "and the third man would probably run away."

"It is the squeamishness about shooting robbers that causes robbery to continue," said H——. "A friend of mine lately killed two with a right and left rifle-shot in Mexico, and the road has been much safer since. The common view to take is, that the robber is to be considered more than the traveller."

"Yes!" said I,—"now the robber who selects this profession is, if he has read Adam Smith, aware that the little industry required, the rapid profits returned, and the exciting and romantic character of his trade, would draw so many persons into it, that there would soon be nobody left to rob, *unless*, observe me, unless there were certain drawbacks. One of those drawbacks, the bandit is well aware, consists in the liability to be shot in the ordinary course of his business."

"But," replied the reverend gentleman, "if you shoot him, you precipitate a human soul into eternity unprepared; and what an awful thought is that!"

"I am by no means sure that a prudent and

pious thief, going on what he knew to be a perilous expedition (and if he was going to rob us who carry a regiment of pistols openly, he ought to pay us the compliment of thinking it a perilous expedition)—I am by no means sure, I say, that he would not get himself specially and provisionally shrived of his sins in case of accidents; and, indeed, I think the scrupulous traveller has a right to suppose that such would be the case, and dispatch him accordingly at so advantageous a conjuncture."

"By-the-bye," said he, "the robbers sometimes shoot *themselves*—perhaps because they feel it is part of their profession to be shot now and then, and find the scrupulous public object to performing their legitimate share in the transaction. I read in the Granada newspaper a curious story of the suicide of a notorious robber the other day near Seville. It appeared that he had been robbing a horse-dealer, but whether his desperation proceeded from remorse, which seemed improbable, or from a quarrel with his sweetheart, which is, perhaps, still more so, the writer had not been able to make out."

"Perhaps he shot himself by accident," said I, and the conversation turned.

There was a pinkfaced, affable young gentleman,

lately from one of the Universities, who had come over in the same boat with our worthy pastor. Finding that he sketched, we showed him our drawing-books, which were execrable things, in the hopes of getting a hint or two from his. But it turned out little better than ours, and that rather from a less ambition in the style (Indian ink), than from a greater artistic grasp—for we feel ourselves (in confidence) to be Raffaelles at heart and in eye, only that we have neglected, alas! to furnish our finger-ends with the base mechanical part of mixing the colours and dabbing them on.

However, our friend, we suspect, is a rival in more departments than one, for when we went to bed (which was early, because we had to get up at half-past five next morning), he tapped at the door of our bed-room (opening out of the drawing-room), and asked us for a very long candle that had lighted us to bed. The presumption, therefore, was, that he was about to sit up all night writing a very long chapter of how he got to Tangier.

The quantity of people we have met, evidently *all* about to publish, is quite discouraging. Indeed it is well known that everybody who travels in

Spain does write a book. How weary the public must be. I think we shall hardly have the heart to go into the voluminous vols. However, we shall have a better chance than some; for since we know nothing about architecture, high art, or history, we shall not tell our readers about the same churches and altarpieces, and pictures, and battle-fields, which they have read about so many times over, but about ourselves, and what we saw, and did, and said, and heard, and imagined, with a correct picture of our hunger, and weariness, and ignorance, and impatience, &c., which will give the stupid and ignorant reader, who is, of course, the commonest sample, a clear idea of what *he* might expect to meet with if he threw himself upon the Peninsula. We think that vacant young men in the long vacation, if they knew that in the course of that period they might go out to Seville and learn sufficient Spanish (in, say two months), and then buy a pony and ride through Spain, all within 100*l.*, it would suit some of them to do it.

But I shall never get away from Tangier. I positively must embark. Well, the pilot's boat took us aboard the "Narval," a formidable large black war-steamer. We were relieved of some slight uncer-

tainty, as to how such strange figures would be received, by the lieutenant who politely addressed us in very good English, and after making our acquaintance in about two minutes, introduced us to his brother officers.

We breakfasted with the *gamelle*, and afterwards smoked and delivered a lecture on the English language, for several of the officers were learning it, but our lieutenant (Morin) had a surprisingly accurate and critical knowledge. The surgeon was musical, and had a book full of Spanish airs, which he had written after Rousseau's method, which, he says, is coming very much into use. You will remember that Jean Jacques' first effort was to publish a system of musical notation by numerical figures, instead of those mysterious dots and lines; but at the time the idea met with no attention. The surgeon played the guitar and sang.

Morin, from English literature, came to French. His favourite author was Paul Louis Courrier, a name we had neither of us heard. He produced the volume, read us some extracts, and seeing we very much appreciated them, gave it us. He would not hear our deprecations; he should be in Paris within a fortnight and could get another; he had

given away many copies in the course of proselyting.

Paul Louis Courrier was a republican and bitter anti-Bonapartist, witty and whimsical, amiable, though rather caustic. He was always getting into quarrels with the mayor of his commune, who, according to Courrier's very amusing account, disliked his politics, and encouraged everybody in bullying and cheating him. One might have thought from the quaint and fanciful way in which he complains of his grievances, that they were next door to imaginary ones, if it did not appear in his life that he was finally assassinated by his enemies.

While our time thus passed tranquilly in the cabin, a storm was brewing outside. The wind was dead a-head, and grew stronger and stronger. The motion began to be unpleasant, and going on deck it was found to be raining fast. Shortly it rained faster, and then torrents; the pitching of the vessel, too, had become so unpleasant, that I could not stand the cabin atmosphere.

The whole mess each recommended me to take a several sovereign thing against nausea; but at last it was unanimously carried that, for an English stomach, tea was the sovereignest thing of all; so

a cup was made and administered, and I must say tasted a good deal like physic.

We had established ourselves in as sheltered a corner as we could find on deck, wrapped in our cloaks which shed the torrents very successfully. However, as the rain fell much faster than it could run off by the drain-holes at the sides, there was soon a great flood. This, as the ship rolled, came rushing down upon us, and washing back again in a tidal wave about a foot deep. Of course our feet got rather wet. I never was in such a storm of rain in my life; sky as black as ink; great clouds sweeping over the dark sea before a very violent gusty wind; now and then the tops of the African mountains looking down through a break in the mist. The moan of the gale through the vibrating shrouds, the splash of the paddles, and the plank-deafened metallic din of machinery straining against the tempest, made a sort of melancholy, unmusical accompaniment to our uncomfort, which was so complete, and on so grand a scale, as to gather a sort of consolation from its own sublimity.

You may imagine what sort of work it was, from the fact of our taking about nine hours to go thirty miles in a great steamer. However, there is an end

to all things, and we got ashore before gunfire, which, if we hadn't, we should have had to sleep on board.

The next day was Sunday, and it rained and blew great guns. We were reduced to so low an ebb for amusement as to set about copying a picture of Abraham offering Isaac, which hung in our room. As we sat painting, Morin came in; we asked him to dine, and he greatly enlivened our evening. I gave him my Sevillian navaja to cut the pages of his new Courrier when he got to Paris. He also had brought me an ingenious French leather pouch full of *caporal* (the national tobacco of France, as shag is of England and pigtail of Scotland), which came in useful, for my old Norman one of wood and birch bark, which has served me faithfully for more than a year, broke, being scranched in my pocket, when I fell off pony-back near Moron. The pouch was a souvenir from the surgeon. Our conversation with Morin leapt from French to English, and from English to French, as often as the speaker came to a difficulty and relapsed into his own language to explain himself better.

To-day (Monday) is our last day, and now or never we must see the wonders of the Rock. We

were waked early by Morin, who came to say his *adieux* and *mille choses*. He of course had to sleep on shore; because the fortress is locked up at sunset, and nobody can go in or out on pain of death. Since breakfast I have been out buying a variety of things —tape, a packing-needle, a pair of spurs (English spurs are much sharper than Spanish, and we are preparing a pleasant little surprise for the flanks of our lazy ponies), half-a-pound of gunpowder, a pencil, &c. The diplomatic waiter has gone to get us permission to see the galleries. I will write you an account when we come back, and with it finish this; for to-morrow we shall start for Malaga, and I may as well tell you now, for fear I should forget, that your next letter had better be directed to Granada.

Well, the diplomate of the hotel brought us our permit, and we climbed one of the steep staircase streets, and entered beneath the Arabesque arch of an old Moorish castle, which stands forth, picturesque and ruinous, above the smug, scientific masses of modern fortification. The court-yard within seemed full of guard-houses; here the British soldier smokes clay-pipes, and drinks beer with an accompaniment of familiar British imprecations, where once the Moslem warriors, cased in Cordovan steel, drank their

coffee and stroked their beards, with pious *inshallâhs* and other solemn ejaculations.

An Irish artillery corporal took charge of us, a very civil engineer. He conducted us along zigzag passages, among fortifications with cannons here and there, which have left only a vague impression on my mind, but I dare say there were ravelins, and curtains, and covered ways, and counterscarps enough, if described accurately, to be quite impregnable to any civilian lady's understanding. At length we came to a black arch, and plunged into the rock. Our corporal led us up dark, steep, dripping, sloppy caverns, the celebrated galleries of Gibraltar. Here and there, in the ascent, were deep-niched portholes, through which, at airy depth, burst in upon the darkness, what seemed by contrast bright views of sea and mountain, though the day was rainy and dark and windy. Of course, in each porthole was a great gun. After getting very hot and steamy in the damp caverns, we emerged on a point where there was a mighty rushing wind, pleasant and cool, but so violent that it seemed likely to blow us off the precipice. Here we stood, keeping our feet as well as we could, on Calpe's brow to admire the view.

This northern extremity of the Rock breaks away

from Spain with an abrupt precipice of goodness-knows how many hundred feet, as if solidly resolved to have nothing whatever to do with the adjacent country, to which it is only attached by a low strip of tawny sand. On either side the leaden

> "Waters chafe to meet,
> But pause and crouch beneath her feet."

This quotation having been had off, led us to discuss whether Gibraltar was to be considered the Corinth of the moderns, or Corinth the Gibraltar of the ancients, and then (as we entered St. George's Hall, a great frontal sinus in the forehead of the Rock) having been carried back upon history, we naturally proceeded to carry ourselves forward upon futurity. It was agreed that as long as England lasted, Gibraltar would never yield. But that when Macaulay's "Australian native sat upon his broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's," some civilized barbarian of somewhere else might come to the deserted Rock.

He will wind his way, in some fear of wild beasts, up the galleries, and come to what some ancient record of the place (for we will suppose him an antiquarian savage) informs him "was called by that warlike nation, the Britons, the hall of St.

George, their patron saint, a fabulous warrior god. I dare say they sacrificed to him here, perhaps human victims, for they mingled many barbarous customs of remotest antiquity with their faint and inefficient notions of religion." Here he will stride across the cavern thoughtfully, as if to measure its size, and stumbling over the rusty old remains of a 32-pounder, awake from his reverie and continue, "Truly, they must have hacked and hewed with great perseverance to hollow out these huge halls and passages in the solid stone, and much energy and zeal were thrown away in the worship of that once powerful but now broken-down demon, War. In the days when the nations were so little aware of their interests as to send out great ships to batter one another to pieces with these deadly engines, whose name I forget," kicking the old cannon again, "a great master of those hellish arts, called Nelson, is said to have feasted in this cave—doubtless, after a sacrifice of human flesh. Yet this monster at the time was the idol of popularity among his people. It seems to me that soon after his era, and by the way the great Frank Napoleon's bloody career, that the nations began to conceive peace was an advantage, led by one Cobden, also celebrated for having introduced corn into his

country, which formerly had only potatoes, both important vegetables, I fancy, before we discovered the system of feeding by electricity."

Our Irish gunner seemed much taken aback by these anticipations, and I have little doubt, in confidence, thought us slightly deranged. But to reassure him, we began to cross-question him with scientific projectile questions in gunnery, and from that branched off to personal inquiries as to his duties, and the sort of life on the Rock; for the private soldiers are not allowed to go beyond the Spanish lines. He said it was not a disagreeable life, but they now and then had some very "witty fatiggs," which we found out to be weighty fatigues, such as taking guns up and down, &c.

To-morrow we set off for Malaga as early as we can get our limited washing back from the laundress, being, in spite of our true British pride and glory in the spot, rather sick of Gibraltar. After all, I have not given you much idea of it, but no description ever does give any real idea of anything, nor does it signify much.

Ever yours.

LETTER XII.

Malaga, March 20.

Upon the road again, and, after our little oasis of decent living in Gibraltar and Africa, restored to the romantic luxury of Spanish hunger and Spanish fleas. H—— woke me early on Tuesday morning, and made me get up, though I murmured in my sleep about the impossibility of getting away while our linen remained in the hands of the faithless *lavandera*. However, when I was fairly awake and up, I joined him in *carambaing* severely at the chamber-maid. Such, indeed, was the force of our language, that it brought the shirts and stockings home wringing wet, and of course we had to send them back. While they were being ironed we got our breakfasts, and the last touch put to our passports, so that by the time our shifts returned, we were prepared to stuff them into the alforjas and be off.

Leading our ponies out of the stables, where they had been nearly a fortnight, we found them so stiff

that they could hardly stir, and I actually thought mine had had his back broken by some unfair usage, and accordingly began to *carajo* at the stable-keeper —having my suspicions of him the more because he had wanted to buy our ponies; and now I thought he had made them drunk to prevent their going away, for they staggered about, and seemed, moreover, as much excited in their minds as they were infirm upon their legs.

These suspicions, which were of course eminently absurd and unstable-minded, wore off as our little beasts, recovering the use of their legs (but not the serenity of their minds), began to prance, and kick, and rear, and jump bodily three or four feet up in the air, greatly endangering the equilibrium of the cloaks, and mantas, and alforjas, piled upon their backs.

The Moor at last, in an extra fit of violence, managed to throw himself down, and scatter all that was on him in the dust. It occurred to us, as we had got out of the town, that if we were to mount, eleven stone or so additional on their backs might add to the gravity of their deportment. This succeeded very tolerably, and having passed the Spanish lines (where they did not search

us, I am happy to say, for I had a lot of Cavendish tobacco), we came to deep sandy roads, which soon took the extra shine out of our animals, whom a crapulence of British corn without any work (*otium cum dignitate*) had thus stimulated to rebellion—oats being much stronger food than their accustomed barley.

Turning back for a farewell glance at the Rock, it struck us that it was rather in the form of a tomahawk, and it was suggested that it might as well have been called Scalpe instead of Calpe. The handle is, of course, the low end at the south. However, it was the sharp-notched edge seen in perspective which gave the idea.

The deep sandy road along which we were riding was, in fact, the beach of the sea, and for firmer footing I wanted to ride on the narrow rim of wet sand left by the slight ebb: but to this the Moor, for whose sole benefit the intention was, resolutely objected, being strongly of opinion that some of the waves that kept bellowing and smacking their foamy lips, would certainly eat him up at a mouthful if he gave them a chance.

So I, of course, being nearly as obstinate and unreasonable as himself, spurred him, and kicked

him, and buffeted him, and got him very nearly as foamy and lathery as the sea, all for his own sake (originally), and to save him trouble. I could not help being reminded of philanthropists, and abolitionists, and Exeter Hall, and religious persecutions.

These speculations were put out of joint by arriving at a place where a great ship had been wrecked, evidently very recently. Huge flakes of massive, closely pegged plank-work, torn to ragged pieces like brown paper; masts, sails, and cordage, strewn about the beach, with the sea tumbling and roaring, and booming, close by the remains of what it had demolished, and hungry for more. Some men on horseback, who came from Gibraltar to see after her, said she had gone to pieces in the great gale on Sunday (the day, by the way, we came over from Africa), and her cargo was all lost.

We inquired of the men the way and distance to Estepona. The distance appeared much further than we had calculated on, and the way turned inland from the beach, for the river Guadiaro could not be forded at its mouth, and we must go about a league inland to find a ferry. This was provoking, as the coast lay still in the direct, though impracticable line to Estepona. So we turned inland

through mazy and uncertain paths across the dehesa, which, with its fragrant flowers and bushes, here sloped down to the sea.

"It seems a pity," said H—— with a sigh, "that so many sweet and pretty things should be almost thrown away. This is quite a fancy-sample of a wilderness, such as Don Quixote's Cardenios, and Marcellas, and Dorotheas, might have chosen to hide their woes in."

"I have an idea," said I, interrupting him; "we will put some of them at least (gathering a handful of lilies, and anemones, and other unknown flowers) to some poetical use, and that is the legitimate end of flowers." (Here the other honourable gentleman was understood to suggest, "Bees also, perhaps!") "Well, honey is for poets to eat." ("Possibly prose writers also," says he.) "However that may be," continued I, overriding these unimportant protests in the impetus of my enthusiasm, "here shall be performed a rite,"—here I knelt down before a smooth sandy place, and with my dagger traced a certain lady's name upon the ground (while I was doing which, the Moor also went down on his knees three times—wishing very much to have a roll in the warm sun-baked sand) and on each letter of that

name I strewed a little heap of the wild flowers of the wilderness, that the winds and the rain might be longer in wearing that frail monument away. And H—— laughed (a melancholy laugh), and said he wished he was in love too, and could get up a rival sacrifice of botanical idolatry in honour of some other Dulcinea. By the way, the dried up anemone I send you enclosed is from the spot, and you ought to consider it worth any money.

Well, we jogged on, and on Guadiaro's further bank nearly came to dagger's-drawings with the ferryman about some inconsiderable amount of which he felt it his privilege to cheat us; but any attempt of this kind now rouses our indignation to a pitch far above what the pecuniary amount at stake warrants, on the score of being an implied insult to our understanding, and a denial of our now established character of experienced and long-accustomed wayfarers, to whom it is highly derogatory to be mixed up with ordinary cheatable excursionists from Gibraltar.

After this we approached the coast again, and got into very rough riding among mountain-tops, from which we saw the white towers of Estepona rising from the blue sea at a great distance—in fact a hopeless distance, as it was sloping towards sunset.

However, we plunged recklessly down almost impassable gorges and lost ourselves in deep valleys (and were shouted at by peasants from the other side of one, for riding over precipitous, swampy barley-fields), and climbed out again, and at last, when it was dark, scrambled down to the sea-side again, where we found a fort and a venta.

Here we bought some fish of a little boy with a basket. A great heap of corn had to be moved out of the only spare place where we could sleep. They gave us one large mattress, and after supper we went to bed, I in my jillabiah and cloak, and H—— more as a Christian. Some way, I fancy, the fleas do not bite so much when one sleeps in one's clothes. As our venta was what Major Pendennis's man would have called "raythera shy place," I went to sleep with my revolver in my hand—by the way, I do usually lay my little arsenal of pistols and dagger by me—but this night, for greater security that it should not be removed, I had kept it in my hand. A dangerous bedfellow.

Before my going to sleep, the family had come crouching through our room to theirs, of which this was an ante-chamber without a door. However, I had pinned up a quilt with the

forks of supper, and under this they had come, stepping noiselessly, and gone to bed in the dark. They did not seem over respectable people, and perhaps this dark and hushed procession had given my subsequent dreams a turn, for in the middle of the night I woke up suddenly, feeling myself touched, grabbled for my revolver, which had got lost among the bed-clothes and cloaks and mantas, and then in a sort of somnolent despair hit out wildly in the dark, and pitched into H——, who woke up, and after mutual explanations, we went to sleep again.

Next morning before daybreak I was up—(and ye shall note, that when a man sleepeth in his clothes, getting up becometh a simpler operation, for he hath but to arise and shake himself and his toilet is accomplished, which avoidance of complicities much encourageth early rising)—and, after rousing the drowsy host and shrill hostess for not having a chocolate-pot, had to make it (we luckily carried chocolate with us) with a pipkin and a wooden spoon, and burnt my fingers with the hot splashes. H—— was up by the time it was made, and we ate it before the venta door.

Now, as we prepared to go, and asked for our account, though we had eaten our own fish,

and drunk our own chocolate, and there was nothing to pay for but the cooking of the fish, the mattress and the two horses, say, a real and a half for the cooking, four reals for the bed, and six reals for the two ponies, altogether eleven and a half reals (about half-a-crown), our fat thief of a landlord charged us nineteen. This we refused to pay, telling him we were no absurd spendthrifts from Gibraltar, but prudent men, who had travelled through all the Spains, seeing men and ventas, and acquiring an accurate knowledge of prices.

"You are Englishmen, and that is sufficient for me. I have known a ventero to charge a dollar to an Englishman for entering his venta and drinking a glass of water."

"That ventero was a thief, and that Englishman was a fool. We are not fools, and we hope you are not a thief. One thing is certain, we will give you no more than twelve reals."

Here the money was thrown on the ground, and we made as to ride away.

"You shall not depart thus—thieves yourselves and niggards," said the fat host, who had been stimulated in the mean time by the shrill hostess, and advanced to seize H——'s bridle.

Here H—— dismounted in haste and drew a pistol; whereat all the tag-rag of the venta ran like rabbits into the door, and the master retreated; the mozo de la cuadra, the bravest man of the party, stood his ground, and took up a great stone. While the pistol yet remained directed towards the still-uplifted stone, another power entered the field, in the person of an aged and rather shaky old corporal of the carabineers in the adjoining fort. However, H—— resisted his attempts at mediation, and called him an old donkey, which, as a man in authority, seemed quite to take him aback.

During the temporary lull, I may go into a slight diversion, describing what you have a right to expect would be the result of such an unwarranted and rash appeal to arms. The corporal finding two refractory strangers who will not pay the reckoning of his friend and neighbour, and who, to make the matter worse, calls himself an old donkey, of course calls out the guard.

Nine men, in seedy uniform, appear with carabines, and take us into custody. We are put in a basket and hoisted up into the entrance hole of the tower, high above the ground. The guard return to

their breakfast, of which, with customary Spanish politeness, they beg us to partake, we civilly decline; but finding them not bad fellows, enter into conversational relations, and finally win the corporal's heart with a long cigar.

Meanwhile we put in a fair statement of our case to a now willing audience. They agree that, to be sure, it was a villanous imposition; and, moreover, the ventero always cheats them in their *aguardiente*. We do a portrait of the corporal and a caricature of the ventero, and moreover doctor a sick carabineer, who has a fever and lies in a dark corner of the donjon. Finally we sally forth by the basket, the corporal (having been told he is the most valiant corporal in Spain, or the known world, which is the same thing) blusters for us, and threatens the ventero, who takes the twelve reals, and we find we have gained six reals and an adventure at the expence of half a day's journey and a good many cigars.

However, this little history, which when expanded with much interesting discourse, may look very well in "the voluminous," will not be, strictly speaking, historical, except in Sir Robert Walpole's sense of the word, as it did not—in confidence—take place; for seeing that the sun was going up upon our wrath, and

that we were likely to lose time, and only get deeper into the mess, I recommended H—— to pay the money and come away, though I had previously been of opinion, that if he had sat on his pony and kept his rein clear by means of his pistol, we might have gone away and left the money on the neutral ground. However, we had our scene, and perhaps it afforded its fourteen penn'orth and twenty minutes' worth of amusement.

Leaving the venta del Castillo, our road ran along the bay to Estepona, where we baited in a respectable posada, and breakfasted on turkeys' eggs (not bad things), fried bread, and the famous amber wine of the place, made in the posada's own vineyard. The hostess and her sister, cheerful young women, entertained us with much pleasant badinage while our breakfast was being cooked and eaten; and wished to have their portraits taken, but we said it was a long ride to Marbella, and we must press on.

To-day we had to pass a more than infernal number of rivers: eleven swollen torrents rushing down from the precipitous range of mountains which skirt the coast. These torrents were all level with the banks, some more than a hundred yards wide,

running like salmon leaps; and, as the ground had been much torn and cut about by the recent floods (which must have been serious, for uprooted trees were lying about in all directions, and great tracts of the dehesa were smeared with mud and sand), we had no assurance that the current—usually up to our ponies' breasts—might not deepen into unforeseen channels and swamp us in the surging tide. H——, who got used to fording unknown rivers in the American deserts, took the lead, selecting the most turbulent places in the surface as the safest: for, as another great navigator says—

> "Passions are likened best to floods and streams,
> The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb;"*

and we met with no worse accident than wetting our feet and the bottoms of our alforjas.

By the side of the sea between Estepona and Marbella, we rode among the ruins of an ancient town, whether of the Romans or the Moors we could not say, perhaps a little of both. Nevertheless, our want of antiquarian erudition did not prevent us moralising on the old masses of grey masonry, which the excellent grouting-cement of other days still holds together in grotesque forms of dilapidation,

* Sir Walter Raleigh.

while around them and among them branch and bloom the shrubs of the dehesa.

"Where now the wilderness is silent save to the rustle of the palmita stem, the hum of bees and the sailing seabird's scream, there were noisy streets, and bustling market-places; and columned angles of public buildings, at which hook-nosed, hawk-eyed Romans discussed the lately arrived proconsul. Or here arose the mosque, and shrill muezzins called the faithful to prayer, and kneeling Moslems muttered and bobbed their turbaned heads to the carpeted level of their slipperless feet."

Now, whatever it may have been, the place is deserted; not a habitation of man within miles of it. The wreck of ages reminded us of the wreck of yesterday. But enough of moralizing. I think in "the voluminous" we shall have to draw a band of robbers out of the ruins, who will appear appropriately at that stage of the moralizing, when we have got to "the utter vanity and worthlessness of worldly things;" they, as a practical commentary, carrying off our clothes, money, alforjas, and ponies, leaving us nothing but our sketching materials to draw upon for support on a vagabond tramp to Malaga, where we could draw a cheque.

Entering Marbella, and inquiring for the Posada de la Corona, we were directed this way and that way by interested parties, and at last had to give up looking for it, and take up with the San José, which we stumbled upon in our fruitless search for the one recommended by Ford. Before the gateway a swaggering carabineer demanded our passport. We said he had no business to be in such a hurry, and that at night they would go in the proper way to the *jefe politico* (political chief), but he began to bluster violently and be very troublesome, and evinced himself to be the worse of liquor, so we told him he was an impudent *borracho* (sot), and went to the stables, leaving him in the court-yard to vent his offended military dignity on the landlady, who seemed rather afraid of him. In the stables we had a parallel scene of dissension between the Moor and another entero. Afterwards, with much trouble, we got some sardines for supper, and I helped the posadera to salt and flour their shiny sides for the frying-pan.

Next morning we were off early, though the weather was not very promising, and rode along heavy sandy shores in a drizzling rain (I in my Moorish jillabiah, with the hood up, which kept me

pretty dry), with nothing to enliven the road except a wearisome succession of watch-towers at about two miles' distance from one another. The weather cleared up.

I had made a paper cigar, and had dropped the rein on the Moor's neck, to strike a light, when he suddenly started off, and plunging down a steep place, threw me on my face. My nose was considerably bruised, though I fell only on sand. If it had been anything harder, I don't think I should have got up with any nose at all.

At Fuengirola we baited at a new clean posada, whose master spoke to us in English; he was a brisk little man from Gibraltar, and had a most melancholy-looking blind wife. I was rather tired, and lay down on the sanded kitchen floor before the fire, ate some bread and cold sardines, and smoked a pipe; after which a short nap.

Roused up to go on again, in hopes of getting to Malaga that night, we went along till some fellow-travellers we overtook on the road told us we must turn inland up the mountains, as the rocks rose out of the water, and we could not get round, the tide being high. After toiling up mountain roads some time, a picturesque village came in sight, and as

Malaga was two or three leagues further, with bad roads and not much more daylight, and weary beasts who had been wading all day in the deep loose sand of the shore, we gave up all idea of going farther.

So we turned our ponies adrift, and sat down among the rocks to sketch the village, which some passers by told us was Ben el Medina. Its church stands on a rock-ridge, the village in the cleft below, and there were two convenient palm-trees in the foreground. H——, who is hopeless of colouring, did a creditable sketch in less ambitious sepia. I got tired of the village, and drew my pony, as he scrambled among the aloe-spiked rocks, nibbling at the tufts of grass. As the sun descended, and the peasants came flocking into the village with their cattle, we joined the rout. I don't think there is anything to relate about the posada more remarkable than that they gave us some walnuts rather bigger than hen's eggs.

Next morning we wound over the ups and downs of the mountain promontory we were crossing till we came to a village on the brow overlooking a narrow plain between the hills and the sea, at the further end of which the towers of Malaga appeared. This plain was shockingly muddy, and there was an

impassably flooded river, so we had to turn out of our way to find a ferry. The Moor was much alarmed at the idea of crossing, and I had to bandage his eyes with my pocket-handkerchief.

Before reaching Malaga we sat down to eat some bread and cheese by the road side, and were much stared at by some evident Englishmen riding out of Malaga. The hedge-rows hereabouts are peculiarly luxuriant; great aloe-spikes, like elephant's tusks, ten or twelve feet long, waving bulrushes bigger than pike rods, and prickly pears, like grotesque aerial battles of huge green-winged toads, the great flat cactus-leaves growing out of one another in the most fantastic combinations. We overtook a man travelling with a heavy-panniered ass, who, to help himself along in the noonday heat, was holding on to the tail, and I drew him in my pocket-book as a sample of Andalusian industry.

Malaga is an uninteresting town, famous for its wine (which is to my taste sweet and nauseous), and for its climate, to which invalids come in numbers, though they all say the place bores them to death. The harbour is full of wrecks, half sunk, and full of water; some of them with their decks torn off and floating loose. We climbed to the

castle, very steep, and with a good view of the town and harbour.

In a courtyard, at the top, some soldiers were pitching a 32-pound shot from a scratch on the ground, and could throw it about eight or nine yards. They did it something in the manner of roundhand bowling, and we were rash enough to try, but failed signally. I was very hot, and as I have had a Niagara of sneezes since my damp ride on the beach yesterday, I thought it a good opportunity to rush down violently into a cold bath, which H—— said would probably kill me on the spot. Natheless, being an hydropathist in some degree, I persevered, and my cold has stopped at once.

As I was coming to the hotel I saw some silver buttons (Cordovese filigree), which I had seen and wished for in the same shop, as I passed through Malaga coming out to Seville, of a sort I have never seen elsewhere; so I bought them to adorn my waistcoat. Then losing my way, I came to a fruit-market, where eating a very large orange, I was saluted by some boy, whom I shortly recognised to be the servant of a Frenchman we met at Olvera. I don't know if I told you about him, or that we had made acquaintance with his wife at the Christobal Posada, in Ronda.

She lived in the room opposite, and fell heir to the remains of our tough mutton, when we went away. However, the boy would have me come with him to pay a visit to his master. The Frenchman received me in a large bare room of an out-of-the-way but vast old posada, with much cordiality. He said his wife had told him she met us at the Christobal. He sent for her, and when she came she fairly rushed into my arms.

I was a little embarrassed by so affectionate a reception, for I thought her husband might be jealous—but *you* need not; for, in confidence, she was not at all lovely, though that was no argument for him. However, he took it as a matter of course, and they fell to questioning me, with much interest in my prosperity, as to how I was getting on with my profession.

I opened my eyes, forgetting at the moment what my profession precisely was, but he proceeded to ask if we had done any portraits. I said, we were only arrived to-day, and told him the name of our posada, and we should be most thankful if he could recommend us to any customers. "Ma foi," he would do his "*possible!*" so I went home to dinner.

After dinner we wandered about the town, and

came to a motley and gilt obelisk, set up, I believe, to Espartero's friends who were shot. Here we sat together on a stone bench in the plaza, where I had sat alone as I loitered about Malaga, a forlorn and solitary wanderer, on my way out. This is the first place in which our present journey has crossed my former one, and I could not help being struck by the pleasant contrast. It certainly was rather desolate work then, and I felt a fresh gratitude to H——, which I fear, as is usual with stoical young men, I did not sufficiently express.

To-day being Sunday, we remain here; to-morrow we go on to Granada by Velez and Alhama, where I hope and trust I may find a letter. If you knew, that is to say, if you could imagine and understand the feverish anxiety with which I look forward to the great cities where I have told you to direct to; and how much more pre-eminent they are in anticipation, because they hold the next chance of hearing from my own favourite correspondent, than because they are great cities, you would never fail to confer that eminent distinction on them and me with proper punctuality.

H—— is always painfully jealous of my raptures over your letters; but it is his own fault that he has

not an own correspondent too, to write him quantities of charming, affectionate, impertinent nonsense. I tell him that there are hundreds of delightfully prolix young lady letter-writers, covering week after week interminable quires of note-paper to other young lady letter-writers, to whom they have vowed an eternal pen-and-ink constancy, any one of whom—and are they not all perfect angels?—would have easily consented to turn the channels of her epistolary profusion upon him in any part of the world, leaving her other young lady letter-writer to complain in hysterical reams of lamentation to still another young lady letter-writer, and so on *ad infinitum*. But he says, with some show of reason, that there is only one Mabel in the world, who is (of course, merely out of compliment to me) an exception to all general rules, but with regard to the rest—

> "For several virtues,
> He has liked several women—never any
> Of so full soul but some defect in her
> Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
> And put it to the foil;"

therefore he has not been able to fall in love, though he is waiting impatiently to do so; and I have to continue the passage on my own account,

> "But thou,—oh! thou,
> Most perfect and most peerless, art created
> Of every creature's best."

I am come to a sad pass, to have to quote Shakspeare, so I will have done. This letter and we shall be on the road to-morrow. Of course you are very anxious to hear what a lovely place Granada is; and when I get there, I shall hasten to let you know, that is, *if* I find a letter. If not——but I will not threaten beforehand—hoping you will prove a dear, good Mabel, as, shall I say, usual.

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIII.

Granada, March 25.

GRANADA, and no letter! oh, Mabel!—— Here I stopped to collect materials for vituperation, and in the meantime stumbled on a little calculation, by which it appears that, since I told you to write to Granada, there has not been time enough for a return of post. So I will let my thunders sleep a few days, till—but I dare say a letter will come. Meanwhile, I suppose, I must drag on a lengthening chain of correspondence over the last remove. We only stayed two nights in Malaga, for we were anxious to see Granada and your handwriting.

Velez is the first stage, and as it is a short one we did not start early, intending to sleep there. The road for a league or so out of Malaga, I suppose out of compliment to the numerous English invalids, was more alive with beggars than any part of Spain we have seen before. They were also more elaborately squalid, in the extreme

picturesque of misery. This showing a design upon the sympathies of our countrymen, the British spirit rebelled against the idea of being taken in, and we passed great numbers crawling like aged broken-down vermin, out of caves and crannies in the road side. But then reflecting that we had lately given very little by way of alms, I said to H—— "I don't see why we shouldn't give these wretches something! After all, the determined congregation of beggars to a place where English people are plentiful, *is* a compliment to our national benevolence. These beggars *are* very old and wretched, and they only cultivate their misery and dirt like any other estate, and bring it to the best market."

Hereupon H——, who happened to have a good deal of copper money, began to disburse liberally—so much so, that an old man riding behind us on an ass with empty panniers, seeing him throw the immense sum of a couple of 2-cuarto pieces to an old hag with one eye and a grizzly beard, thought it a pity to lose the opportunity of getting something himself, since little fortunes were in process of being scattered about the road with such reckless and unbounded profusion.

He came up alongside, and entered into a piteous detail of his immediate losses and general poverty.

At first we did not make out exactly what he would be at, and listened to his grievances civilly; but when he wound up with plain begging, the originality and boldness of the idea of a mounted beggar struck us in so humorous a light that we could not help laughing in his face. His story was that he had come into Malaga that morning from a distance, and had sold some garden-stuff for two dollars, of which he had been in some way robbed or cheated, and now he had not an ochavo in the world. We rode along before him talking about his case, when, as the road had turned in from the coast and become lonely, an idea struck me of a sudden.

"Suppose we rob him," I said to H——; "I 'll be bound he has the money for his cabbages safe in his pocket, at any rate we will see." He protested that it was eminently absurd, and that we might get into a tremendous scrape—but I would not listen to reason. I foresaw it would be an original adventure. So I turned my pony's head and we waited for him to come up. He quickened his

pace and overtook us again, making a still more piteous face than before, in the evident impression that we had taken his misfortunes into consideration, and were about to do something handsome for him. What, therefore, must his surprise and horror have been, when, as he got fairly between us, I drew my six-barrelled revolver, and thus addressed him.

"Impudent old scoundrel—stand still—if thou stirr'st hand or foot, or openest thy mouth, I will slay thee like a dog! Thou, greedy miscreant, who art evidently a man of property and hast an ass to ride upon, art not satisfied without trying to rob the truly poor of the alms we give them. Now, it is the religion of the Ingleses, founded on the precept and practice of the celebrated Saint Robino Hoodo, to levy funds from stingy old curmudgeons like thyself and distribute to the poor. Therefore at once hand over the two dollars of which thou spakest, otherwise——" here I clicked the cock of the pistol.

During this little harangue, which was delivered gravely (though H—— was obliged to turn away his face at the mention of Robin Hood as a "santo muy famoso"), the old culprit had gone down on

his knees, and was trembling violently, and muttering deprecations, for the love of the Virgin. But, as I did not relax the stern expression of my countenance, he said in a shaky voice—

"One moment, caballeros, and I will give you all I possess. But I am poor, very poor, and I have a sick wife at the disposition of your worships—"

"Wherefore art thou fumbling at thy foot? Thou carriest not thy sick wife in thy shoe?"

"I can't untie the string, my hand trembles so; will your worships permit me to take out my knife?"

I nodded, seeing he was really frightened, and not all likely to do any mischief with it. He cut the thong, which had been knotted over and over again, and taking the shoe off his stockingless and filthy foot, turned out a handful of small silver, chiefly two-real pieces, into my hand. He then groped in his breeches' pocket, and brought out a good deal of copper, which he also gave up with a very submissive air. I replaced my pistol in my faja, and made as if I would ride on. As soon as he saw his life was no longer in danger, his pecuniary loss began to work on his constitution, and he burst into tears.

"Come, now! None of that—or we shall feel it our duty to shoot thy donkey, that thou may'st have something to whimper *for*."

It was a piteous sight, to see the grey-haired old impostor crying like a child, and I thought we had punished him enough, so I said,

"Now we know thou *art* poor, since we have taken thy money, we will give thee a trifle. There" (dropping his money into his hat, which he held out timidly) "is something by way of charity; and take heed that thou begg'st not again when thou hast money in thy pocket, and so remain with God, my friend."

With this we rode on, and were in some slight fear for the rest of the day, that he might find some of the Guardia Civil, and send them after us to take us up. But I dare say it never occurred to him, as we left him no poorer, that our offence was actionable.

Velez Malaga is not a very interesting place. I know nothing remarkable about it, except that the *Cautivo* in Don Quixote landed here with his fair *Morisca*, on his escape from Algiers. I trudged to the market-place and bought a pound of sardines for dinner, and afterwards helped to cook them. The

landlady and her pretty sister came up after dinner, and told us that there was a company of players about to perform, so we went. It was a shabby little theatre, with bad actors, the prompter being the most audible of the company; so we left the second act, and came home to bed.

Next morning, in saddling, I discovered a great misfortune which has fallen upon me. A small running sore has come on the shoulder of the Moor. H—— says it is only to be expected, with such clumsy, straw-stuffed saddles; especially as I have ridden all the way, since our first disaster close to Seville, without stirrups, which of course works the saddle more about on his back than if there were a support to balance one's self by. I cut the pad open, and pulled a good deal of the stuffing out in the obnoxious place: and led him out, determining to walk as much as I could, till we got to Granada.

Acting on this intention with vigour, I walked the first two leagues, H—— entertaining me on the way with a treatise on sore backs, of which so many of his party's horses died in the desert. He says, if we were obliged to press on without stopping, as they had to do, the Moor's term of life would be about a month; and then, after passing through a

state, when at every staggering step the spurs forced a groan out of his wasted body, he would drop at last, and be eaten by wolves and vultures. But we should have a chance of curing him at Granada, staying there ten days or so.

We discussed many sovereignest things for a sore back, but I have declared myself for treating the Moor like a Christian, that is at least as I should treat myself. I shall poultice at first to get out the inflammation, and then wash the place with a solution of lunar caustic. At Viñuela, where we breakfasted, I washed his back with hot water, and left a wet rag on to cool the place. Soon after Viñuela the road begins to steepen.

At Velez we had turned inland to go up over the mountain-range which runs parallel with the coast. High above us appeared a deep round-bottomed nick between two flat-topped mountains, across which gap lay a great white bolster of cloud. I am aware it would be more in the acknowledged style of descriptive scenery to call it a "giant portal of the mountain fastnesses, curtained, &c.," but that would not give you so true an idea.

To this pass we rose by weary zigzags. The rock-walls at its entrance are precipitous and full of

fissures and caves, especially on the left. One of these, "El nido del moro," high up in the almost perpendicular face of the rock, is said to have been the lair of that celebrated marauder, Sahib-el-Comr, or rather his principal entrance, for the whole mountain was supposed to be perforated with a labyrinth of winding passages leading to and from innumerable vaulted halls.

STORY OF SAHIB-EL-COMR, AND THE QUEEN AELFA.*

In these caves Sahib and his band dwelt at ease, nourishing their hearts in luxury, and served by the sons and daughters of Eblis. As the road from Granada to the sea passed immediately below the nest of this vulture, who swooped on a good many of King Ibnulahmar's choicest importations, that potentate made many efforts to dislodge him.

But the search always proved fruitless, and the expeditions uniformly returned, reporting that the Jinns had closed up the old passages against them and opened others for the bandit's escape. At length the favorite sultana of the harem, having been

* Abou Kizeb.—Cronica de los Sultanes de Granada, traducida por Gazmoño de Mentiras.

cruelly disappointed of several bales of embroidery from Fez, which Sahib had seized to his own use, she being a lady of great spirit, swore by the soles of the prophet's slippers, that she herself would find a way to keep the marauder in more order. She first persuaded the old king to close the eyes of circumspection with the seal of confidence, and he swore beforehand to abide by the plan which she thus disclosed.

"It is well known, O king, that force will not overcome this traitor, who is assisted by the powers of the air: but though man can do nothing in such a case, it does not follow that a woman could not. Send me, therefore, with a dozen of the most worthless of your guard, as if I were going down to the sea."

"Wállah aaleyki," cried the old king, "and if thou hadst fifty of my best men, what are they to this hornet's nest which is a hundred strong at least, to say nothing of Jinns. The dog would certainly slay thy escort and take possession of thy precious self."

"That is what I anticipate. He will take me to his bosom, and when I have obtained his confidence I will betray him into thy hand."

"But in the meantime, and perchance for ever, I lose thee, O daughter of my soul. Cannot some of thy women do this in thy place?"

"It was said by the sage Ben Wisaakir that there is no great gain without some little loss—as to sending one of my women, which of them can I trust? How can I tell that she might not like the robber's cave better than Alhambra's gilded prison, and never attempt to return?"

"Thou sayest well.—Nay," added the old king, thoughtfully stroking his beard, "how am I sure even of thee? As the singer hath said,

> " 'Deem not that any oath can bind
> The fickle troth of woman-kind!
> They change their minds, and break their oaths,
> As they break bread and change their clothes.
> Their love and hate in treacherous trim
> Are poised upon a captious whim—' "

None but a prophet can affirm with certainty how far the king might have extended this derogatory quotation. But at the sixth line queen Aelfa arose in silence, and as a flask of vinegar might be corked with a rose-bud, she stopped his ungracious rhymes with her lips. For, as the singer saith again,

> " The silent touch of woman's lips,
> To warp man's will to hers,
> All sweetest eloquence outstrips
> Of wisest counsellors."

The conference closed, and the queen did as she would.

Now, the chroniclers of the period differ, as to whether there had been any previous acquaintance between Queen Aelfa (who was the daughter of a worker in the precious metals dwelling in the Zacatin) and this noted robber. One asserts that, when Sahib one evening had entered Granada, in the disguise of a fakir, to sell some rich spoil which he brought under his ragged robes, they had met and had a clandestine conference in her father's back shop.

But this appears to be an impudent interpolation of some one determined to have a previous reason to account for the subsequent catastrophe.

It is certain, however, that when the queen was taken, as she had calculated on, she lived, to all appearances, perfectly happy and contented with the robber for some time. In the third year she had a violent quarrel with him. The cause is not mentioned, but it is said to have occurred shortly after a large capture of damsels at a village wedding in the neighbourhood. The virtuous and constant Aelfa casually happened at this conjuncture to remember the promise she had made to the old king; and resolved to betray the bandit.

Treachery never lacks an instrument. There was a black humpbacked rogue of great bodily strength, but little intelligence or honesty, called Caleb-esh-sheytan, which, being interpreted, signifies the hound of Satan. He had long arms and legs —a very broad back all doubled up into an expanse of shoulders on which you might have set a pack-saddle. He was used as a beast of burden to carry off plunder, being very swift and sure-footed on the mountains. He was also of use in countenancing an idea that the robber was assisted by Eblis, from his plausibly fiendish appearance.

This man, or rather animal, had regularly to be beaten for attempting to pilfer some of the booty committed to his back, for he was so stupid that they always found him out. A continual course of castigation had soured his temper; without bettering his morals to a pitch capable of perceiving the necessity of honour among thieves, and he had only not run away and directed the king's troops to the cavern already, because it had never occurred to him.

What he wanted in ingenuity Aelfa supplied; and she sent him off with a letter to the king,

telling Caleb to conduct the troops which would be entrusted to his guidance, by an unfrequented approach down a long sloping corridor whose mouth opened on the top of the mountain. He had not been gone many hours when she, with that rapid decision which characterizes the female sex, changed her mind. Whether before or since the sojourn in the cave, she had acquired a strong affection for Sahib-el-Comr, who was a splendid, stalwart, bold and fiery ruffian, such as ladies need must love, however their calmer reason disapprove. So with tears and contrition she confessed her guilt and disclosed the plot.

Sahib bismillah'd and inshallah'd and twirled his moustache, and finally forgave her. He blocked up the passage with great masses of rock, leaving a huge heap of subtile explosive powder, of which he knew the secret, and which in these days it is thought may be applied to projectile purposes. Aelfa and Sahib waited behind the obstruction at the appointed hour of the night. They heard the stealthy approach of feet, and then the thick voice of the negro saying, "Here is a great heap of sand!" His feet were in the powder. "The queen has doubtless strewn it along the way that

our steps might not make a noise on the rocks," replied the captain of the troop.

"We are betrayed," cried the negro, as his hands came against the great stones which blocked up the way. "If we are betrayed thou shalt not escape," said the soldier, apparently running his dagger into Caleb's back, for he gave a long scream. Here Sahib dropped his touchwood into the train and retreated rapidly. In about a minute the mine exploded, and the whole expedition were killed except one man, who had hung back in the dark, and stood at the mouth of the cavern irresolute what to do.

The fire-blast knocked him down, and burnt off the greater part of his beard. He recovered, and in due time got back to Granada, where he reported "that he had been the first man to follow the black demon down a bottomless pit, to which Gehennah was as a rat-hole. That when they had gone several furlongs into the heart of the mountain, Eblis had appeared in their way in the form of a fiery dragon into whose mouth Caleb had walked as if it had been his own house, and sat down among the dreadful teeth as if they had been palm-trees in his patio. Hereupon the dragon

snorted fire and brimstone for the space of a quarter of an hour, the negro imp grinning complacently among it all the while, and clapping his long black bony hands. All the men were soon burnt and smothered, as he himself should have been if he had not (knowing the sort of work he was going to undertake) used the precaution to extract the whole chapter of Alkafireen out of the Koran, and get his wife to sew it leaf by leaf all under his dress, and to carry the soorat el fatihat el kitab * in his hand, which he had set over his eyes and nose and mouth—but it was unluckily not large enough to cover his beard.

The king, being very much disheartened with the failure of his expedition and Aelfa's treachery, saw no better way to ease his feelings than to cut off the singed head of the narrator, which was accordingly done—and so the story ends.

After passing the great gap in the mountain barrier, the road, without descending, crossed a flat green plain or vega, very fertile, and in which, if you had been dropped there, you would never have guessed you were three or four thousand feet above

* The opening prayer of the Koran.

the level of the sea. Around, still high above us, stood the snow-capped hills with great white clouds leaning upon them. As we rode along, the wind rose and the clouds descended upon us. We had now passed the flat land, and were winding among the turns of low hills over which swept the galloping vapours. Every now and then we could see the distant peaks of snow through a momentary rent in this rushing mist, and fitful gleams of sunshine would light up specious semblances of embattled towns among the nearer outlines of the rocky hills, and then roll the landscape up again in a moist blanket, through which it was impossible to see more than twenty yards ahead of us.

I was very tired, and, impatient with the long-delayed hope of getting to our day's work's end, ejaculated the appropriate "ay de mi Alhama" with much fervour, many times. The few peasants we met on the way seemed in league with one another to put us out of heart; for the nearer we approached, the further they represented Alhama to be. At last, at the top of a hill, when we had almost given up Alhama as a Mrs. Harris ◆amped up by Lord Byron and Mr. Ford, the mist suddenly blew away, and a little grey-stone, rock-girt nest of a town, very

different from what we had expected, appeared in the hollow beneath. The main street, down which we scrambled, is not paved or macadamized, nor flagged.

It is a steep slope of solid rock, across which grooves are cut to give some little foothold. The Casa de los Caballeros recommended by the guide-book seemed an unpromising place, and we had to put our ponies in a sort of coal-hole. I was dreadfully tired and hungry, which resulted in a certain impatience of temper against which my philosophy is not proof under such trials. There was no mozo de la cuadra to get a place made for our ponies among the fuel in the coal-hole, except an imbecile grandfather of the establishment, a very helpless and garrulous old boy, who could not even get us any barley.

The woman of the house, too, was stupidly inquisitive about the hot water which I had asked for to wash the Moor's sore shoulder; and I showered the effect of my irascible exhaustion upon both their heads in such a volley of *arriero* language, that H—— was obliged to remind me of my official capacity as the mild and persuasive spokesman of the party; saying, with much show of reason, that I could not *carajo* his decrepitude out of the old man,

nor her curiosity out of the landlady; and that, beyond these incidental disadvantages, they seemed disposed enough to be civil and obliging. So the huespeda, by degrees, heated some water in the frying-pan, and the old man gabbled and fussed and pottered about till the ponies were finally provided for. I washed the Moor's shoulder, and found it had not got so much worse as I expected. The landlady made us an excellent supper of water-souchet, fried anchovies, and salad.

The old grandfather sat in the blazing chimney-corner, playing with his grandchild, a stout little boy about five years old, of whom he was very proud. In intellect they were about on a level; but the little boy, in the vivacious wilfulness of his youth, had quite the upper hand of the pottering old patriarch, who seemed quite happy and unconscious of the infant tyranny under which he laboured. They prattled folly together quite seriously. I never saw the two ends of life so brought to a balance. This downward progress of man to the point from which he started, is a curious *reductio ad absurdum* of the worldly theory which makes this unsatisfactory retrograde existence its final aim and object. Here is a choice piece of rather prosy morality, which you

may give the pious Miss D—— towards her next tract.

The ride from Alhama to Granada is grand and dreary. Barren, undulating table-land, without a tree to break the sky-line of rugged mountain summits all around. The day was dark and windless, and the vapours, which had been scouring about overnight, lay in great, soft, lazy pillows and feather-beds among the snowy jags.

We overtook a crippled soldier with his crutches, charged on an ass, whose master encouraged him to keep up his pace with many thwacks from behind. The soldier was in great spirits, returning to his native Granada after an absence of a dozen years, singing and loquacious, and quite confident that his native air would soon set him on his legs again. He had been broken down by some artillery accident at Tarifa. It appeared he paid a real a mile for being carried on the donkey—about $2\frac{3}{4}d.$ or the average price of first-class railway travelling in England. We began to compare our own expenses, and cast up our account to form an average of our expense per mile. It cost us about three shillings and sixpence to four shillings each a day for ourselves and our beasts. This divided by twenty, the number

of miles we generally go in a day, makes an average of a little over 2*d.* a mile, which is not ruinous. Of course in the large towns it cost us more, this being calculated for the scale of costs on the road.

We had been descending gradually towards an isolated mound, which stood at the bottom of a long slope, and had been in sight many miles; in fact, ever since turning the steep brow out of the valley of Cacin. As we approached this mound in the bottom of a broad space among the mountains, it grew larger and larger; and when we had baited at La Mala, and came to ascend it, it turned out quite a mountain itself. We were in a high state of anxiety to catch the first glimpse of Granada, and busy building all sorts of impossible Alhambras in the air. Ronda, we recollected, had belied our fond anticipations, but Granada was an acknowledged wonder of the world, and must at any rate be very striking.

Meanwhile the edge of the hill was turned, and Granada lay before us, about four miles off. Do you expect a burst of enthusiasm? Alas! I fear there is nothing earthly can bear the fatal ordeal of a previous reputation—not even the great Niagara, which a disappointed American once said was a

"perfect failure." Granada from our first view was a plain-looking largish town, on a slight slope at the foot of an ordinary mountain. We could hardly make out the Alhambra from the hill-side. The famous Vega, over a corner of which we were looking, was of a dingy green. The day was cloudy, and the fine amphitheatre of mountains looked cold and dreary; besides we were used to mountains. However, as we rode along, some glimpses of sunshine kindled purple gleams among the distant peaks, and sprinkled emerald lights about the Vega, and here and there brought out bright towers and spires, marking the scattered hamlets of the plain. You see I am getting enthusiastic after all, for here I have run into blank verse, which is the approved method among bad writers of expressing what is called a high tone of feeling, as if prose had not a rhythm and music of its own without running into iambics; but I am getting truly prosaic now. I shall return to the blank verse and high tone of feeling when the place has grown upon me, and infected my mind with the true spirit of description, and I can manage to work myself up into an edifying little delirium of fine writing. At present an humbler theme demands the attention of my muse.

Our arrival took place about the hour of sunset, when the good people of Granada, as well as the bad and indifferent, I suppose, were sauntering about the paseo in a body. We were very considerably stared at, being, I should think, about as remarkable objects as Buckstone and Wright got up as elaborate Adelphi countrymen might be, riding into London by Rotten-row on cart hobby-horses. We had forgotten the name of our hotel too, and had to ride about inquiring among the staring crowd. The people were all dressed in the pink of Parisian fashion, and no doubt looked upon us as a pair of exceedingly quaint barbarians from some rustic village of the Sierras. At last we found some one who knew the name of our landlord, which was all we recollected, and directed us to the Fonda de la Amistad.

Thank goodness, our portmanteaus had arrived, and we should be able to dress ourselves like Christians once again. They had come some days before, and had been got through the Custom-house (locked and sealed up) by the persuasion of the fair Señora Vasquez, whose *lindos ojos* had smiled away the official punctilios of the doganero. We rushed into the luxuries of soap and water, and clean linen.

While we were dressing, our door was beaten by

not less than a dozen applicants, who expressed, through the keyhole, in various degrees of approximation to French and English, a desire to guide us about Granada. Every body here is a guide, from the man in the stables—who took occasion, while I was washing the Moor's sore shoulder, to recommend himself—to the man who showed us up to our rooms, and mentioned that he was not the waiter, but a guide, as he brought the hot water. This was a good-looking young man, dressed in the pink of majo fashion, all over silver brooches and tags, whom we had taken to be the brother of our hostess. He proved to be a son of the celebrated Bensaken; and while we were at dinner he returned to the charge, bringing two volumes of testimonies to his father's qualities as a guide. We told him that it was against our principles ever to be led about, and that in fact we had made a vow to stumble through Spain without guidance; a course which might be the means of our missing many remarkable objects, to whose possible loss we reconciled ourselves, in consideration of the pleasure we took in going our own way.

It was too late for the Post-office that night, and my bitter disappointment was deferred till next

morning. However, I will say no more about that, for this letter must go, and I will not tell you anything about Granada and the Alhambra, though I have seen it. I will leave you to dream of me till my next letter, wandering through the enchanted palaces which Washington Irving and other romancers have built in your imagination. I will destroy some of these beautiful cobwebs with the coarse housemaid-hand of truth in my next. But, good gracious, why should I knock your pretty fancies to pieces? The most honest description gives no idea of a place; and since people who don't travel *will* be absurd enough to fancy they get any true ideas of foreign parts from reading travel-books, why should not travellers "make things pleasant," as is done in railway accounts. The true way to travel now is by panorama? I am more and more disheartened with the prospect of the voluminous volumes in which I shall have to puff off all these places with the most rapturous and fervid praise, so as to exceed, if possible, all previous exaggerations. The world likes enthusiasm—the world, which is so flat and prosaic itself, is full of a blind expectation of something better than it finds in real life: and this want is supplied in a certain degree by novel-writers

and lying tourists. In confidence now, Mabel, are you not getting sick of these long letters? Lay your hand on your (bump of) conscience, and say whether you have yawned or not, since you began this. I have a great mind, in future, to be very brief, as, for example, instead of these three illegibly close-written sheets, "Dearest M., we have arrived in Granada, viâ Alhama, well, and without accidents; we shall be here a fortnight. Yours, &c." But then I write because it is a pleasure to write to you, and if you don't read because it is a pleasure to read my writing, however indifferent the hand or matter may be, I shall feel very much hurt. But I dare say you read patiently enough. So farewell.

END OF VOL. I.

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